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POEMS

LYRICS & SONGS ON THE LIFE MARCH.

BY

SHELDON CHADWICK.

S. Anne Ruimer.

WORKING AND SINGIN

POEMS, LYRICS, AND SONGS

ON THE LIFE-MARCH.

BY

SHELDON CHADWICK,

AUTHOR OF "PARADISE OF PASSION AND OTHER POEMS," BOGUE, PUBLISHER, LONDON, 1854;
AND "POEMS OF LIFE," ROUTLEDGE, PUBLISHER, LONDON, 1858;
REVISED AND INCLUDED IN THIS EDITION.

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This Volume of Poems

IS

Dedicated

TO

MR. JEREMIAH CHADWICK,

CITY MISSIONARY, MANCHESTER,

IN AFFECTION AND GRATITUDE,

BY HIS SON, THE AUTHOR.

I DEDICATE to thee, my Father dear,
Whose eye beheld me in my studious hours,
These last fruits of my spirit, plucked from bowers
Where dwell the Muses. Oh, with conscience clear,
And love of truth, and faith like beaten gold,
Long hast thou wrought. Thine is the nobler crown!
But at thy feet I lay my garland down
In token of remembrances of old.
The storm rolls o'er our England, fierce with ire,
I hear the rushing of the tempest's wings;
Athwart the shrouded sky the thunder rings
That beareth in its breast the bolt of fire!
Clad in the Christian-panoply she needs
Heroes, led on by Heaven to dauntless deeds.

LONDON, *February* 18*th*, 1875.

PRELUDE.

Y Muse, what fault with thee the World will find!
Thou little Orphan shivering in the cold;
Poor wandering Minstrel singing in the wind,
Faint with the effort ere thy song 's half told.
Yet haply some kind heart may list thy lay,
And turn to thee a fond and friendly eye;
Cheer thee along with sympathetic ray,
And o'er thy sorrows breathe the tender sigh.
What bringest thou but flaunting weeds for flowers;
But dross for gold, and flying dust for flame?
Thy harp-strings rusted with regretful showers,
Why value now the vanity of Fame?
Before the Mansions of the rich and great
It is not thine to tune the silver chords;
The lowly Cot alone befits thy state,
Where Woman smiles at Childhood's prattling words.
What marvel when each trembling line with tears
Was often blindly blurred and blotted o'er,
Through many wildly-wasted wandering years,
With Weariness behind and Want before!
Yet would I teach my children dear to me
What lofty thoughts from lowly nests take wings,
That lives of poor men to poor men should be
As sacred as the histories of Kings.
Oh! is not this of every heart the cry?
"What small fruition grows from yearning seed!"
But if the spark within the Soul could die,
Life were a failure, Time a blank indeed.
My lowly Muse! kind lightener of my load!
When every starry Hope appeared withdrawn,
We walked and talked and sang upon the road,
Wayfaring, waiting, watching for the Dawn.
The Dawn that lingers long will break at last,
As to a shipwrecked sailor on the wave;
A friendly sail may save us from the blast,
A ghostly billow sweep us to the grave!

TO MY WIFE.

She is now in the "Silent Land." But the Sonnet, which was the Dedication of the Author's first published volume in 1854, is retained as a memorial of her, and also because it explains the purport of the principal poem in the book, "The Paradise of Passion," wherein many of her own sentiments and impressions are expressed.

O God, the World, and thee, my gentle Wife
And dear Love-Angel, who hast made me strong,
I consecrate these spirit-bursts of Song,
Youth's aspirations for a nobler life.
'Tis scant this harvest of my furrowed brain;
But not all desertness. Thoughts budded free
Out of my heart, as leaves out of a tree.
Within these pages breathes no word to stain
The silver bloom of chastest Purity:
Each line was writ as if a Seraph's eye
Looked o'er my shoulder. I girded me to cope
With armed Error and beleaguering Wrong,
To snatch from Doubt the flower and crown of Hope,
And God's orbed image,—Immortality.

THE PARADISE OF PASSION:

A POET'S DREAM OF LOVE AND HEAVEN.

SCENE I.—An Evening in Spring.

The Poet—Sylvia, his Wife—Spirits of Beauty, Love, and Truth.

THE POET.

Hail, Holy Architect! whose finger formed
From the Divine Conception yonder Moon,
Whose yellow flood of glory fills the sky,
And gilds the earth with its refulgent smile.
Thee I adore among these circling hills,
Creator, Governor, Central Life of all
This star-dowered Universe,—sole Lord and King,
Whose other name is Love,—all-powerful Love.
I magnify and glorify Thy Name,
For I am but an atom in the beam
Of Thy refulgence. But the least may kneel
Low at Thy footstool with a prayer sincere,
And hail Thy glory with a hymn of praise,
Like those grand Poets of the elder time,
Whom little I resemble but in love
To Thee. I'll bless Thee both in Life and Death,
And from this mountain's head in azure steeped,
And from these nodding groves around it spread,
Where flows the streamlet like a silver thread,
To Thee I lift my heart in praise and prayer.
Thou art no dark enigma to thy Child,
An earthly guest, who breathes empyreal air;
Thou hast impressed Thy signet on his heart,
Through grace whose Holy Dove in peace abides.
There seems a new Star in the Heavens to shine
With a celestial radiance from Thy throne,
And all the Universe is full of Thee!

SYLVIA.

My Love, tread slowly o'er these blissful hills.
I love to linger in this temple lit
With those eternal lamps of heaven—the stars.
Yon holy Minster seemeth but a speck
From these proud heights, where Nature builds her fane,
To which her worshippers may climb and kneel.
Yes, we will trust His love, while, hand in hand,
O'er briers and thorns, we journey to the door,
By Mercy *opened, and by Faith* made clear.
God's Paradise is not Tradition's dream,
'Tis not a Poet's vision, wrought with words;
For Angels now, as in Earth's early prime,
May hold in human souls their councils wise.

SPIRIT OF TRUTH.

Blind Science shall proclaim the doctrine true,
When from its eyes the veil is rent away.
Good Angels walk amongst us as of old.
Hear ye the knock, and open wide your gates;
Accept the message from the world unseen:
For they are sent from God, as guiding stars,
To lead us softly to the Home above,
And make our hearts bloom fresh with morning dew.
There always stands an Angel at our door.

POET.

God's world is now so dark, few flowerets bloom
Of truth and love; but through the hedge-row shades
Will soon peep forth a mass of fragrant gems,
And re-create a Paradise anew,
Such as ne'er rose upon the Poet's view.
Oh! if this truth in golden words were writ,
For every child of Adam's race to learn,
The gilded altars of Chaotic Creeds
Would fall in ruins, and each knee would bend
To the Most High, our Father, and our Friend.

SYLVIA.

Hail! glory-blazoned sky, Heaven's starry gate,
The garden of the Palace of our God,
Wherein the angels walk embowered by trees
Laden with fruits of amaranthine gold.
There blooms in Bliss our first spring-blossom, torn
By Death's white hand from Love's now barren thorn;
And she whose holy vestal flame expired
Above my baby cradle, and left me
Groping in the dark for light and Heaven:
My sainted Mother and our first-born Child.

SPIRIT OF TRUTH.

When some dear Prattler from our knee is snatched,

And laid beneath the hillock's daisied sod,
'Tis but the limbs so pink and lily-white
That wither there,—the spirit is with God.
Take heart, young Mother, for thy Babe is there:
With such Heaven's Kingdom is most sweet
and fair.
What unblown Bud did ever backward grow?
What Star, once kindled, ever ceased to glow?

SYLVIA.

Words of comfort, endless joy,
Thanks shall every thought employ;
Singing lovebird, spotless rose,
Where eternal Summer blows.

Break, Oh! break, thou Morning sweet,
When my Babe and I shall meet;
When we meet, Oh! thrilling spell,
Never more to breathe farewell.

POET.

I, too, have a Mother there,
With our Baby young and fair,
Numbered with His gems above,
Drinking from the Vine of Love.

Oh! how bitter is the smart,
When from those we love we part!
Oh! the bliss that conquers pain,
When the parted meet again!

SPIRIT OF BEAUTY.

Earth is beautiful. Poet, see!
In white robes shines yon hawthorn tree,
Glimmering through the moonlit night,
Like a spirit of love and light.

Earth is beautiful. Land and sea
Are ringing loud with song and glee;
Trees of emeralds build their bowers,
Rippling meadows reel with flowers.

Earth is beautiful. Spring is here,
Bees make love in the cowslip's ear,
The hyacinth, like a blue-eyed maid,
Hides her loveliness in the shade.

Earth is beautiful. Summer smiles,
Roses blush in the lanes for miles,
The hedge-rows seem to blaze with fire,
While music peals from the feathered choir.

Earth is beautiful. Autumn time
Cometh with orchards in their prime,
Gathering sheaves of yellow corn,
Crowning with fruitage Plenty's horn.

Earth is beautiful. Winter old
Builds a palace of gems and gold,
Strokes his beard, and in ermine dressed,
Counts up his gains, and takes his rest.

SPIRIT OF LOVE.

Heaven is beautiful; Heaven is fair.
Poesy flashes its pinions there,
Art with its jewels decks the walls,
Music enchants its jasper halls.

Heaven is beautiful; Heaven is fair.
Harps resound with melody rare,
Robes of purity Saints invest
Woven of thoughts that thrill the breast.

Heaven is beautiful; Heaven is fair.
A Baby smiles in a cherub's chair,
With soft brown locks in shining rings,
Like golden flash of seraph's wings.

Heaven is beautiful; Heaven is fair.
Beyond the rainbow's glory there;
Never a cloud can come between
God's gracious love in souls serene.

SYLVIA.

Thanks, gentle Spirits, for your music bland,
I seem to take twin-angels by the hand;
Lo! there are myriad legions of the blest
Bright as the hues which gild the sunlit west.
My heart was dried up, like a desert well,
But now I feel the rapture of your spell;
Oh, all my hopes were like the parching
flowers,
Which clasp their little leaves in prayer for
rain,
Until ye poured Love's soft ambrosial showers,
And oped their petals to the sun again!

POET.

Let us descend once more into the vale,
While glow-worms glitter in the gloomy
lanes,
Like sea-green gems dropped by some queenly
Star.
The Moon is up upon her zenith-throne;
And smiles benignly 'mid the gleaming spheres.
She cometh down her shining stair of stars,
Like some fair maiden to her lover's bower,
Who weeps because he hath not kept his tryst.
Pilgrim of heaven! Bride of the beauteous
Night!
Altar of prayer! and Heiress of delight!
More do I love thy pensive shadowed brow
Than all the splendour of a Summer day;
For thought seems born in unison with thee,
As if a skylark, from its cage set free,
Should hail thee God of daylight and of joy.
God's midnight Lamp thou oft hast been to me,
Lighting the wanderer on the dusky road;
And I have kissed thine image in the Sea,
While skimm'd the skiff to music from the hills.
Fair Eve turned from the picture of her face
Reflected in the fountains and the rills,
When she had fallen from her high estate,
And wept to see thy purity and grace.
The garnished halls of music and of song,
The painted thrones of eloquence and art,

Where Fashion's votaries in thousands throng,
Are beggared by one silvery smile of thine!
What lay is that outrolled from yon deep woods,
That thrills my soul with blissful wonderment?
The nightingale's! like a lost angel singing
At Heaven's closed starry gate up through the night,
Breaking her heart with the imploring song.
Adieu, thou amorous bird with accents sweet,
Prolong till morn thy rich, impassioned strain;
Another eve, within this green retreat,
I'll come to list thy minstrelsy again!

SCENE II.—EARLY SUMMER.—A GARDEN ON AN EMINENCE NEAR A VILLAGE CHURCHYARD.

Poet—Sylvia—Children—Wedding—Funeral—An Old Man's Soliloquy.

POET.

'Tis morn, 'tis morn; forth from his Orient bed
The Bridegroom Sun into his Palace steps,
And walks on emerald carpets set with flowers.
The sapphire walls with golden pictures gleam
By that incomparable Artist, Light.
Wake, Sylvia, wake, the lark is in the skies!
Queen shalt thou be of all the flowery May!
Hark to the blackbird's sweet entrancing song!
He calleth thee, my Beautiful, from dreams,
With, "Come, love, come, to Summer's dædal bowers:
Come gather pleasures growing on the tree:"
Not sudden joy-grapes, bursting on the lips.
Life's verities are holy Love and Thought,
And light incarnate in the Soul of peace.

SYLVIA.

Hail, blushing East! How fresh the garden shows,
After its slumber in Night's dewy arms!
Hear the shrill skylark. Let us take a peep
At Nature just awaking from her sleep.
She seems to smile at sorrow and distress,
Tossing with glee her saffron-shaded dress.
Patrician eyes will miss her radiant face,
Her early budding loveliness and grace.
The violets, like stars, shine in the grass,
And strive to hide their beauty as we pass.
To peaceful thoughts my pining soul they move;
Their purple stains are beauty-spots of love!
The scented thyme from mounds of earth upstarts,
Creeps over stones, like love o'er hardened hearts;
And when 'tis trodden underneath our feet,
It fills the air with fragrance fresh and sweet.
Come, let us sit upon this young green couch,
With mossy leaves and lily-blossoms strewn,
O'ershadowed by the Oak with verdure crowned.
Why do my languid limbs thus long for rest?
Soon will the daisies lie above my breast.
I feel as might a bird with wounded wing,
Which *cannot feel the gushing* joy of Spring.

POET.

God's Acre this, where all shall sleep at last.
Soul of my soul, sweet Empress of my heart,
My own True-love, what Soul can ever dream
Of base extinction in the silent dust?
When dying unto Self the spirit feels
By faith the fluttering of angelic wings.
The Sceptic's cloud-capp'd peaks of crystal thought
Will melt before the Rising Sun of Love.

SYLVIA.

This most momentous question I have asked,—
Of stars upon their blue enamelled thrones,—
Of Nature in her beauty-tinted forms;
But all her wondrous elements were dumb.
I've asked the glaciers and the rolling clouds,
The sun, the moon, the sea in calm and storm,
The lightning and the thunder; but in vain.
What of the painter can the picture know?
The poem of the poet? Oh yearning heart,
See! Nature is God's handiwork, not God.
Then came an Angel, rolled away the stone
From my Soul's sepulchre, and I saw
God's spirit-kingdom was the Crown of all.
Celestial visitants confirmed the Voice
That rose out of the grave of those I love.
But who are these approaching, gaily clad?
Idolaters of beauty!

POET.

Children, with flowers:
They hold their annual Carnival to-day.

SYLVIA.

They touch my heart. Oh! I could kiss them all!

POET.

Here is a rose plucked from our Infant's grave.

SYLVIA.

Methinks my Cherub lives again in this.
I dream its rosy lips again I kiss,
While folded in its cradle soft as moss.
Its fragrance seems my birdie's spirit sweet
Breathing in silence o'er my heart love's balm;
It seems to smile as on it drop my tears.
My tears, not Heaven's. There! lie upon my breast;
Play, children play, ye mind me of my own.

POET.

You know the story of the Painter old;
'Tis always fresh because 'tis ever true,
And every thoughtful mind adds something new,
And takes away some dross that hides the gold.
He saw a blooming child. The light of dawn
Was shining through the azure of its eyes,
And Heaven was mirrored in its crystal mind.
Its beauty was the image of a rose,
Its genius the lustre of a star;
Its voice was mellow as the rustling corn
And running brook,—full of fresh laughing life

And musical sweetness; a silver ray
To gladden earth from the great Source of joy.
Soft rippling curls sunn'd o'er its marble brow
Like sheaves of golden beams o'er hills of snow;
It seemed a miracle of innocence
And bright perfection on its Mother's knee;
The Artist drew it for his fair Ideal,
Wherein a Cherub floats 'mid rosy clouds.
Years furled off the rolling orb of Time;
The spirits of the Fiend are artists too.
The grand old Painter stood within a cell,
To take the copy of a Demon's form,
In intellectual subtlety complete.
He there beheld the same entrancing face
That in its infancy so rosy-sweet
Blushed softly on its Mother's lily-breast.
By crime disfigured, now there met his gaze,
Of that bright picture which God's own hand drew,
The blotted canvass and the shattered frame.
His cheek upon his clenched and clammy hand,
The Felon cowered while through his dungeon bars
The sunset threw one mocking ray of light.
While hope ebbed from Life's shrivelled, barren sands,
The fetters clanked upon his feet and hands;
Crouching in gloom, fire in his heart and brain,
Like a gaunt bloodhound panting in his chain—
The world-abandoned, on whose night of guilt
No mercy dawned for the red tide he spilt.
He heard the Hangman's footsteps, and his eyes
Gleamed with a fearful horror and surprise,
As fiery shadows from a furnace fall,
And flash a lustre on a blackened wall.

SYLVIA.

How strange are some coincidences! Hark!
A Mother singing to her infant child
Where yonder whitethorn bends above the well,
So cool and sparkling in the mossy wall,
And round it winds its boughs like jewelled arms.

MOTHER'S SONG.

BEAUTIFUL child! on thy Mother's knee,
In the golden Future what wilt thou be?
Angel of beauty? or Saint sublime?
Upas of Evil? or Flower of Time?
Weaving of sorrow a fiery crown?
Or twining a garland of fair renown?
Beautiful Child!

Beautiful Child! in my garden bowers,
Friend of the butterflies, birds, and flowers;
Crystal and pure as the sparkling stream,
Goodness and truth in thy features beam.
Never was seen in a mortal shrine
So joyous and fair a soul as thine.
Beautiful Child!

Beautiful Child! thou mayst soar above,
A warbling cherub of joy and love.
Thou art a wave on Eternity's sea,
A blossom on Life's immortal tree.
Young vine, that waiteth the sap to feed,
Long life be thine, and each noble deed.
Beautiful Child!

POET.

Incidents will multiply apace;
Here comes a Bridal to the Minster porch;
The women throng the gates with eager eyes.
"God bless the Bridegroom, and the Bride!" they pray.
Heaven answer prayer! for few indeed are blest.
The Mother holds aloft her gleeful child,
To greet the newly-wed and happy Pair;
And choicest flowers before their feet are strewn.
Yet perjured lips beside the priestly shrine
May breathe, alas! 'mid blessings all divine.
Sad thoughts, avaunt! why dim this scene of bliss?
If there be holy love on earth, 'tis this!
They now are one for ever.

WOMEN'S VOICES.

FIRST VOICE.

What dresses fine!
The Bride is dressed in satin, softly blue,
Embroidered richly with moon-tinted pearls;
And on her head a wreath of orange-flowers,
Becoming well her sweet and modest face.
Four Bridesmaids follow her arrayed in white.

SECOND VOICE.

The Princess wears a ruby-velvet dress,
All bright with emeralds and precious stones;
Yet seems there heart-ache in her pretty face,
Which almost takes away her garments' grace.

THIRD VOICE.

A gorgeous robe of green the Countess wears,
With costly jewels, trimmed with gold brocade;
Her well-worn beauty now begins to fade,
For she is many years beyond her prime,
And richer colours like the autumn leaves
She needs, to hide the ravages of Time.

FOURTH VOICE.

The Marchioness looks comely, fair, and tall,
A flower of Beauty fairer than them all;
A moving Splendour, with no false alloy;
A Light of glory in a realm of Joy.

SYLVIA.

Oh! let us pencil for the beauteous Pair
A Future of beatitude and bliss.
What is't to be a Bride? It is to feel
The pangs of separation from that home
Where she was nurtured by her parents' love;

Her girlhood's home, the pure unsullied kiss,
Perchance the last farewell to circles dear.
It is to give a fond, confiding heart
To one who still is dearer far than all:
To bind or break long as its pulse shall beat.
'Tis oft to watch, and oftener still to weep,
To bear a lonely sorrow in the soul,
And cling the fonder when all else hath fled.

POET.

Lo! ere the Wedding Chimes have ceased to peal
O'er youth and beauty, wealth and rosy Joy,
A funeral procession winds along;
And full beside the gate their faces meet.
Is it not pitiful o'er Earth to mark
Injustice, wrong, and inhumanity
With purple robed, and throned at lordly feasts,
While Truth and Gentleness outraged succumb
To poverty and misery and shame?
Shall brambles climb to an exalted place,
While vines rich-clustered trail along the ground?
Shall song birds creep, while hissing serpents fly?
Shall Guilt in Palaces be purple-clad,
And trip o'er velvet swards in silken shoon,
And Innocence recline in mud-built walls?

SYLVIA.

That Problem often has perplexed the wise:
God's moral government of chequered life,
The mystery of Evil and of Good.
How often tender Women toil for bread,
Support their aged parents, droop and die,
While hoary Misers mount to thrones of gold
Upon their fallen necks! Yet God is just:
For Oh! it is the End that crowneth all.
Better it is on briers and thorns to tread,
In journeying to the bosom of a friend,
Whose home of refuge beacons from afar,
Than o'er a precipice be headlong hurled
Into a gulf where sunbeams never shine.
The Miser's gold is but a fleeting ray:
The gold of God is one Eternal Day,
Who then shall envy Wealth and Pomp and Power,
With all the care from Royalty that springs?
Worms risen from dust for one poor transient hour,
To flutter o'er a grave on gaudy wings!
God help the Poor who suffer and are good!
A Conscience pure outweighs a hoard of gold;
And bringeth Happiness a thousand-fold.
Yet do I weep to see yon orphan Boy,
In tattered garments crouching by the grave
Of his sole friend, a Mother, poor but kind;
His childish voice half choked with broken sobs.
Yonder, an Outcast, like a poor soiled flower,
Flung to the earth, torn from its parent stem,
Bewails an only sister's early doom.
The Pastor takes her kindly by the hand,
Converses with her in his accents mild,
Whilome she hides her wan, tear-dabbled face,
And leans in sorrow 'gainst the cypress tree.
Worst of her sex, 'tis said, she lingers last
Beside the grave. But, hark! the bell tolls on!
For such as she all clemency seems gone.

POET.

Oh! Mercy is the melting eye of Heaven,
In beauty beaming on the erring Soul;
The rainbow shining through the deluged air
Of sorrow, God's bright covenant of love!
Extracting glory from our falling tears.
Sweet sister of meek Pity, warm-souled Mercy!
Scatters fresh flowers upon the grave of grief
Abundant as the lavish hand of Spring
Upon the snowy breast of torpid Winter!
She spreads the banquet, lifts the breaking cloud,
And blessings drop like manna from her wings.
She enters where a King would fear to tread,
In dens and hovels, where God's sunshine creeps
Like some fair stranger amid ruined shrines.
She writes a Gospel with her sacred feet
Among the dwellings of the alien Poor;
Uttering soft plaints of promised bliss that move
Angels to tears. She takes the broken heart
Upon her breast, and whispers words of balm;
And pleadeth in such piteous strains for souls,
That all Heaven sighs, and plaintive Cherubim
With weeping dim the glory of their King.
Her accents are as soothing as the dew
To sun-scorched flowerets,—green leaves to the birds,—
A downy pillow to a wounded limb;
For Mercy is that precious link from Heaven
Which binds Humanity in brotherhood,
Lights souls benighted by the wing of Woe,
And whispers of the Eden we have lost.

SYLVIA.

Let us approach the mourners by the grave
Paying their last sad tribute to the dead.
A widow mourns an only daughter's loss,
A violet just opening to the sun
In modest sweetness and delicious bloom;
And Oh! to see the lovely flowers around,
Laughing and dancing in the joyous breeze,
While hers lies crushed and withered in the dust.
But by her decent garb and downcast mien
We may discern the wreck of better times.
Poor weeping widow! How I feel thy grief!
What priceless jewels are a Mother's tears!
Weep not! for as yon setting sun will rise
Again to-morrow in the Eastern skies,
And wake the grass to life, the birds to song;
As from the Winter's sepulchre of snow
Burst forth the floral beauties of the Spring,
So shall thy daughter, in the kiss of God,
Fling off the cold funereal robe of Death.

POET.

Behold that Blind Old Man with tottering steps,
With stately form and venerable locks!
His fingers trace the letters on the tombs
Which deck the rich man's clay in marble graved.

He is ejaculating, "What is Wealth?
And what is Fame? and what is Glory now?"
Yet lovely is the place to seeing eyes,
With trees, sweet-scented shrubs, and rural seats.
And gentle hands, with flowers of every name,
Have wreathed the mounds where the beloved repose.
'Tis well! for 'tis the vestibule of Heaven;
This bright Hope, like a beauteous angel, stands,
And points towards our beatific Home.

SEXTON.

Just at the foot of those embowering elms,
The May-Queen of the year was gently laid;
A scene so beautiful I never saw,
Though I have been the Sexton since the day
Old England's Queen of all the Years was crowned;
It was the Sunday-Scholar's Funeral.

THE SUNDAY-SCHOLAR'S FUNERAL.

'TWAS May-day morn, glad rose the sun,
The woodlands tuned their leafy lyre,
And each grass-blade with dewdrops shone,
A flickering tongue of emerald fire.
The daisies filled the lap of Spring,
Trees shook their golden ringlets out,
And skylarks made the meadows ring,
In answer to the cuckoo's shout.

But ah! one cottage-hearth was drear,
And hearts with anguish ached within:
A Widow wept the bitter tear,
Her child had joined her angel-kin.
Her rosebud, blushing on the thorn,
Consumption plucked with all its charms:
The only lambkin to her born
Was gathered in the Shepherd's arms.

Her Daughter was so fair and young,
And to her Mother good and kind;
At church, amid the choir, she sung,
At school she taught the infant mind;
But in her old accustomed place
One Sabbath-day could not be seen,
Her sweet and well-remembered face,
Her slender form and graceful mien.

Fair as a spotless lily-bud,
Shrined in the wee grey box she lay,
By which the guileless children stood,
And kissed her cheek, now cold as clay.
Such love and reverence were paid
As holy lives alone can share;
And hymns they sang around the Maid
Who slept in halcyon beauty there.

The church bells tolled a solemn knell,
And forth the long procession came;
A white pall o'er the coffin fell,
And Teachers four upheld the same.
All clad in robes of vestal white
A thousand children walked behind,
Up to the church,—a lovely sight:
The mossy lanes with people lined.

Ah! surely this could not be death,
So like a Coronation-day;
While flowers were wreathed of sweetest breath,
And daisies whitened all the way.
For such a funeral as this,
Methought, who would not breathe a sigh?
For death is but the gate of bliss
To all the good who early die.

Beside that bier again they sang,
With thousand voices ringing round;
And all the azure welkin rang
In chorus to the mighty sound.
But ere into the grave had slid
The coffin strewn with sweetest flowers,
A Butterfly upon the lid
Alighted from some fairer bowers.

And by that sign the Mourners knew
The Maiden from the dust would rise,
With angel's wings her flight pursue
Through flowery fields and sunny skies;
'Mid realms where fadeless Summer reigns
Around the bright celestial Throne,
Where God His happy saints sustains
By sovereign Grace among His own.

THE SPIRIT'S HYMN.

Mother, cease thy weeping,
Angels round me smile:
We are only parted
For a little while.
In this land of Summer,
Never veiled in gloom,
Dewdrops shall be gathered,
Lilies shall re-bloom.

Mother, I am happy,
Though 't was hard to part;
Still my spirit lingers
Near thy aching heart.
Round thy pathway ever,
Like the light and dew,
Gems of truth I scatter,
Flowers of love I strew.

Here no joy-bud fadeth
In its dawning time;
Here no love-star waneth
In its zenith prime;
Here no guile can enter,
And no kiss betray;
Here, in groves of glory,
Blooms eternal May.

OLD MAN'S SOLILOQUY.

My only Boy, whose Mother is in heaven,
There to embrace him when he steps ashore,
His poor blind Father's comforter and friend,
Was taken from me ere his manhood's bloom.
Not half his talents or his grace have I;
Yet I am spared. There was a grandsire once,
Who took his little grandchild for a walk:
They crept within the shelter of a tree.
The storm rolled up upon the sultry air,

The lightning struck the tree, and killed the child,
And left the old man by the blackened corpse,
As here I mourn my Darling's early doom.
There, as my dear Boy lay wrapt in his shroud,
I crept into the dim and lonely room,
And kissed his brow and lips and cheeks and eyes;
And questioned of the cold and marbly form:
"Oh! whither, lovely Spirit, hast thou fled?
Wilt thou return and comfort me, my own,
My joy, my pride, my hope of later years?"
But no response was vouchsafed to my cry.
He left this record of his filial heart,
Fresh from his dying lips: "I fain would live,
Dear Father, were it but the will of God,
To do more good than I have ever done,
Lost souls to save and broken hearts to bind,
And write my name, in thoughts and actions kind,
On earthly spirits, like the light on flowers.

PASTOR.

The Shade all fear to name will come at last,
Though of it few will care to think or read:
Some he will find well-dressed, with famished souls;
Some drinking poison out of golden bowls;
Some languishing in prisons lone and dark;
Some laid on beds of down, and some on straw;
Some in the curtained chamber, racked with pain;
Some bartering love for lust, and life for gold;
Some dressing for the feast, and some in want;
Some chasing bubbles, bursting in the hand;
Some on the ocean, 'mid the raging storm;
And some upon the reeking battle field.
He floats upon the perfume of a flower,
With rosebuds crowns his head and withered leaves,
Lurks in a dewdrop, rides upon a cloud.
Wealth cannot bribe him, Beauty cannot charm;
Nor Eloquence disarm him of his dart.
All ranks and stations own his sceptre's sway.
The regal tyrant and his vassal poor,
The stately palace, and the lowly cot,
Must bow before the Monarch of the Grave.
Oh! may we then be ready for his coming!
Strew flowers upon his pathway of good deeds;
So shall we scarcely know that he is near,
Or in the dark his velvet footsteps hear.
Oh! may we sink, as sinks the Sun to rest
Upon his white cloud-pillow in the west,
'Mid glowing hues, which seem like angel's wings;
And feel no more regret than he who sails
Into the Haven of his native land,
After a long, long voyage full of storms,
Where loving hearts sing, "Welcome, welcome Home!"
Not to live long, but well, as in God's eye,—
Loved while we live, lamented when we die.

SCENE III.—SUMMER.—BY THE SEA SHORE.

Poet—Sylvia—Children—A Sibyl—Spirits of Truth and Beauty.

POET.

So soon astir, my Love, to feel the breeze
Play like an infant's breath upon thy cheek
Whose very lilies blush with tints of rose?
Thine eyes, like moonlit violets, sparkle soft
With liquid lustre and soul-speaking joy.
Here, on this daisied cushion, let us rest,
While our sweet urchins swim their fleets of toys,
And fancy themselves Admirals of ships;
With white straw hats perched on their yellow hair,
Rising and falling with the zephyr's wing,
Their garments twined with green bands round the waist,
They seem like water-lilies in a gale.

SYLVIA.

Methinks we never know how sweet is Health,
Like every other blessing, till 'tis lost.
Long have I languished for the life and light
Of this too-blissful and delicious day.
When we behold the gorgeous splendour shed
On the young mountain's verdure-mantled head;
The birds, with spangled plumage, soaring high;
The bending arch of yon cerulean Sky;
Methinks such charming scenes impart at length
The sure credentials of returning strength.

THE VOICE OF THE SEA.

Come from your dwellings, begrimed and benighted,
Haunts with the sunshine of beauty unlighted,
Where the Joy-roses are blushing and blowing;
And tides 'mid the boulders are ebbing and flowing;
Where the great Sea, glorious Minstrel, is stringing
His wild harp of waves to the Sailor-boy's singing.
Summer is here.

Husband and wife, with your love-lilies laden,
Worker and Dreamer and Lover and Maiden,
Nature with carols will welcome you hither;
Rosebriers are blooming. Oh; why do ye wither?
While hearts are worn out the World's Idol feeding,
While gold from the blue veins of Beauty is bleeding,
Summer is here!

Come where Sea-Syrens are pearl-wreaths entwining;
Golden and purple the billows are shining.
Gather sea-flowers and shells for your treasures,
Children once more in the choice of your pleasures.

Come where the breakers, those grey-bearded Sages,
Have written their Epics in granite for ages.
Summer is here.

Come where from rocks leaps the clear sparkling runnel,
Carving through caves to the Ocean a tunnel,
Like a bright thought through a spirit in sorrow,
Flashing in infinite glory to-morrow.
Come let us drink of the life-giving fountains,
Breathe the free air of the peaks and the mountains.
Summer is here.

POET.

Alas! how many, with their passions blind,
Fail even here true happiness to find!
They leave a banquet worthy of the gods
For goblets that transform them into clods;
And to be happy we must seek to bless
Some heart with love that bringeth happiness;
To see our pleasures through another's eyes,
Gay with their gladness, joyless with their sighs.
Grieve not thy Spirit with To-morrow's cares;
But give the Present all thy powers and prayers.
Glide with the tide, the Future is not ours,
Only To-day for us may bloom the flowers.
Live for the Future, but forget the Past,
As we ourselves shall be forgot at last.
'Mid chequered years let trusted Friends be few;
But value those Time tested and found true.

SYLVIA.

All Nature worships God; the passing shower
Sprinkles the grass, bejewels leaf and flower;
The sunshine and the piping breezes play,
And incense rises with the Skylark's lay.

CHILD.

Mother, a strange Woman! Look at her red cloak.
She's coming hither up the pebbly beach.
A yellow-spotted kerchief crowns her head,
Tied in a bow beneath her pointed chin.
Her petticoat of every hue is dyed;
Her coffee-coloured face is wrinkled o'er;
Her tawny arms are hairy, lean, and bare;
Her eyes burn through my brain like red-hot coals.

SIBYL.

My lady's fortune may I crave to tell?

POET.

No, no! not now. I think she knows it well.

SIBYL.

Good Sir, then yours I'll trace upon your hand.
A man may drink the nectar of the gods;
Yet long for Lethe's draught; and some who ride
In Fortune's gilded car, and loll supine
On Luxury's downy couch, had better fared
If winning tear-steeped bread with horny hands.
I'll whisper words of warning in thine ear.
She whom thou lovest for her truth and grace,
The meek white lamb now fondled on thy breast,
Will die; and as the lyre of Petrarch wept
O'er Laura's perished bloom, thine too will weep,
Till every string shall break and thrill no more.
The outer beams reveal the inner light,
The face the soul; eyes are the stars I read.
Through their uncurtained windows I behold
Thy future. Thou wilt weep and wed again,
And lie a stagnant pool, a dry morass,
For years. No sympathetic link will bind;
And each will drift in misery apart.
Thou wilt be robb'd of every hope of life,
Of every dream of honour and of fame.
Duties as well as pleasures marriage hath,
And both united make a heaven of home;
But sundered, love is sterile as the sand.
Death her will also take, and leave thee free,
Fortune will crown thee, fill thy lap with gold,
Which thou wilt melt into a Circean cup,
And curse thy Maker that thou e'er wert born.
By lips like lutes, that lull with tuneful words,
Thy Soul along the dizzy path of wrong
Beguiled, thy life with agony shall bleed.
Pearls in a heap, and gems of wealth untold,
Intensifying anguish, thou wilt spurn,
And rashly fling into the curling flames;
But here the curtain drops. Thy doom is sealed.

POET.

So be it, Sibyl. Now thy fate I'll tell.
Cradled in poverty and rocked in crime,
To slumber sung with lullabies of shame;
And old in sin ere thou wert old in time,
Thou weavest round all simple minds thy spell,
And livest a slander on a Woman's name.
Thine eyes are more than stars, they're burning suns,
That flash with many a green and subtle flame.
Come not between me and these little ones;
But go, may Heaven forgive thy faults at last,
Thy future life atone for all the past!

SYLVIA.

Faces are books, in which the skill'd may trace
The spirit's history of smiles and tears,
And each man's rank is blazoned on his brow.
Some at a glance attract and some repel.
We judge our neighbour trulier than ourselves;
And every Artist knows that he can draw
Another's portrait better than his own.
The lamb, the dove, the fox, the ape, the snake,
Are symbols of some spiritual force.
Cain we should know without an outward brand
Like that which marks the wool of straying sheep.
What infant ever showed a murderer's face?
Society and sin carve criminals.
Within the vilest shines a spark of God,
To blaze into a bright eternal Sun!

POET.

Yes, there are minds with strange magnetic power,

A conquering Will that knows not how to cower :
Its essence words could never yet define :
Its influence is Satanic or Divine ;
A Demon that may blast us at a bound,
Or Angel, with white wings, to clasp us round;
It may appear shrined in a Human form,
Or float in elemental calm or storm :
There is a sympathy from life that springs
'Twixt God and Man and all created things.
The silver dewdrop and the sumptuous rose
And worm or angel still its magic shows.
It is the hunger of the heart and soul,
The fierce desire no spirit can control.
It lives in music, when one kindred string
An answering note although untouched will fling.
The compass of the mariner doth turn
Towards the North ; but why, we cannot learn.

SYLVIA.

Hence Man to his Creator may be drawn,
And prayer, like incense, rise at dusk or dawn;
Thought travel on the lines 'twixt Earth and Heaven;
And answering balm be sent to bosoms riven.
Those myriad drops that swell the mighty Sea
In yonder showery bow may glitter free,
Or, shaken from a cloud borne inland far,
May in some floweret's honied heart be shrined.
Yon Sailor, reefing topsails, sings aloud,
While o'er him sweeps the black and angry storm.
He hears the Captain's summons harsh and bold,
And how his thoughts fly to the loved at Home!

POET.

And by these laws, within our nature sown,
Man may approach the great All-Father's throne.
Picture the Lion in his lair by night,
His brown eyes glistening through his shaggy mane,
Couched in his cavern in the rocky steep,
Or roaming round the frontier of his realm.
He sees the Antelope glide forth to drink,
Where rolls the river through the desert-land.
His sinews stiffen with his royal rage,
And like a flash upon his prey he leaps,
And brings it bleeding earthward at a stroke.
He makes a banquet of its tender flesh,
And drinks the red wine from Life's fountain warm,
Then licks his jaws and sullenly retires.
But does he feel sweet pity or remorse?
Does Conscience thunder louder than his roar,
"What hast thou done, assassin in the dark?"
Not so with Man. The wretchedest and worst
May feel a thrill of goodness like the best,
When Love's own golden key unlocks the breast.

SPIRIT OF LOVE.

GOD in Mercy rules above;
All the worlds are worlds of Love;
Whatsoe'er the Earth may be,
It is as fair as those we see.

Evermore we all may trace
Love in Providence and Grace;
Of Paradise it is the plant
Which satisfies the Spirit's want.

Music through my Soul is rolled
As from a Seraph's harp of gold;
A storm of silver sound it flows,
I know not whence it comes or goes.

It mingles with the roar of Life,
It fills the pauses of the strife;
And jubilant as Bridal Bells,
Of Love and Joy its rapture tells.

And still the strains my bosom haunt,
Like notes of that primæval Chant,
That Angels Concert, which sublime
Lingered round Eden's perfect prime!

POET.

Time to beguile, my Sylvia, I'll narrate
A Story of the power and bliss of Love ;
In green and happy England lies the scene,
And I can vouch that every word is true ;
For oft Impression heals the feeble frame,
And sometimes Reason to her throne recalls,
Like some strong Angel from the World Unseen.

ROSALAINE : AN IDYLL OF LOVE.

A comely rose within a garden grew,
The fairest of all human flowers was she;
Sweet Rosalaine. She was an only Child,
And fondly cherished like a household gem,
With living lustre brightening all around.
A blooming girl she grew of summers twelve,
Which never had been darkened by a cloud :
So beautiful in features and in form,
She seemed a Poet's vision of a saint.

Her parents idolized her for her gifts,
Her beauty, and her rich melodious voice,
And most because she was their only Child.

But Wealth from sorrow is not all exempt,
For though the golden streamlet ever flows,
'Tis over quicksands hidden in the dark.
The mother of fair Rosalaine fell ill,
And faded like a frail flower in its prime,
And as upon her Child's young lips she pressed
The tender kisses of her shortened breath,
The last sigh murmured from the silent shell.

Her father was a Merchant of repute:
The sails of his innumerable ships—
Thick as the daisies on his emerald lawn—
The Ocean whitened o'er, and kissed the breeze.
They bore the fabrics fine of British looms
Out to the burning East and glowing West.

And after a few years of lonely woe
To India's spicy shores for change of scene
He sailed ; also on loyal errands bound,
And thither with him sailed his darling child,

Remembering oft her Lover left behind.
Alas! ere long, through all her virgin veins,
Amid the poppy-blushing fields of Ind,
Crept Fever's subtle pulse-enfeebling fire,
And almost drained the fountain in her breast.
At length kind Health returned and tinged her cheek,
And painted on her sunny lips and eyes
Of English summer all the bloom and light,
But Speech and Hearing were alike entombed.
Two worlds of joy the Fiend had stolen away.
And oft she wondered, "Would he love her still?"

Back to her native England's sea-girt Isle,
Past adamantine rocks in Indian Gulfs,
Her Father sorrowfully sailed again,
His daughter cherishing still more and more,
For now was heavenly pity blent with love.
Two avenues of happiness were closed:
The damsels wondered at her grievous loss,
Yet wondered more to see her loveliness.
Her father lavished on her all his love,
And dowered her with gifts of price untold,
As if she were the daughter of a King.
She slept on pillows of the softest down,
And wondrous rich were all the robes she wore;
Her satin-slippered feet on damask trod,
Clusters of jewels glittered in her wreaths,
Gems in her ears hung lustrous as the sun,
And links of pearls her snowy neck adorned.

Her sixteenth Birthday now abroad had blown
The fragrance of the Summer, and her fame,
The month of roses, for it fell in June,
And she still fairer, sweeter than them all,
With Purity's own signet on her brow,
And in her heart the dove of Innocence.

Oh! let it not be thought that she was bold,
Because she listened to a Lover's vows;
As roses love the sun, and birds the spring.
A favoured Swain her gentle heart had won.
Young Oscar was her peer in wealth and fame.
Son of her Father's dearest friend was he,
And passionately loved he Rosalaine.
'Twas only with their eyes they told their love;
And silent love is heavenly love indeed.
He from his Father's park would ofttimes watch
Loved Rosalaine amid her garden flowers,
Around her woodland nest half hid by trees,
While sunbeams glinting through the flickering leaves
Shone on her wavy hair like shattered gold.

Her Father, with a stern rebuke, forbade
The frequent visits of the haughty Boy,
Conceiving her infirmity a bar
To sweet felicities of wedded life;
But hearts will blossom like the Summer flowers,
When Love, like holy rain, descends from Heaven.

'Twas on a sweet, though stolen, interview,
They strolled together in the twilight hour,
Beneath the flowery vistas near her home,
Where marble Cupids arched the fatal bow.
It was the Birthday eve of Rosalaine,
And she had laid aside with sacred tears
Her Father's precious gifts of books and gems,
And Oscar's beauteous flowers, to keep her tryst.
And as the Moon rose to her jewelled throne,
The Nightingale with wild, untutored notes
Of luscious music hailed it with a song;
Then Oscar pointed to the greenwood tree,
And wished his Rosalaine could hear the bird.
Ah, long they gazed into each other's eyes,
Each knowing all the other fain would say,
As if their souls had melted into one,
Like two bright dewdrops on a rose's leaf
No chemistry of earth again could part.

Then suddenly a wondrous thing befell:
For so it chanced on that all-hallowed night,
The red and dazzling Sun had sunk 'mid beams
Of awful splendour in the crimson West,
And lurid drops of rain fell from the clouds,
Like molten pearls from some o'er-burthened heart.
The lightning open burst the gate of Heaven
And peals of thunder mingled with the blaze.
Another vivid flash, and lo! the tree
By which the Lovers sat was downward hurled,
And terror overwhelmed the Maiden's breast;
For on the ground so motionless and cold,
His forehead wounded by a broken branch,
Her Lover at her feet unconscious lay.

Forth from the dark clouds gathered overhead
Flashed seven-fold radiance round the fatal spot.
She raised his languid head up from the ground,
And laid it on her soft and dainty lap,
Drew back his raven tresses' glossy rings
With timid blushes and white fondling arms,
And smiled to see his wonder when restored.
He spake his thanks in words she could not hear,
And for the first time kissed her forehead pale,
And then her glowing lips and dimpled chin,
Long-lingering o'er the sweetness as a bee
Absorbing honey from a blushing flower.
Then audibly he said, "Sweet Rosalaine,
Oh! how I love thee, love thee until death!"
She, thrilling to the kisses on her lips,
And to the beating of his heart 'gainst hers,
And with the sudden fear and sudden joy,
Heard what he said, and answered in a breath,
"Oscar, my love, thy love is all returned:
Is it a dream? for I can hear and speak!"
Then even the sculptured Cupids 'gan to smile,
And o'er the Minster-tower a Star peeped out
Enraptured to behold a scene so fair.

With awe her Lover held his breath indrawn,
And, first embracing her with rapture wild,
They ran together to her Father's house;
For now the Storm had past, and overhead
Again the Nightingales made echo ring.
The good man sate alone; Thought on his brow
Enthroned in gloom; and in the open palm
Of his left hand the glorious Book of books.

Then Rosalaine beside his shoulder stood
As alabaster white, but spoke not yet;
But Oscar, with a calm and noble mien,
Informed him of the storm, and what befell,
And how sweet Rosalaine could hear and speak;
Then straightway homeward like a wild deer sped.

Fair Rosalaine, with voice as music soft,
Said, "Father, Oscar has but told you true:
My spirit struggled as it were in chains,
Which snapt asunder, and I know no more."

Around his neck her snowy arms she flung,
Caressed his streaming beard, and kissed his cheek;
And pillowing her head upon his breast,
She talked and wept until she dropped asleep.

But little more is needful to be told;
For Love is the awakener of Life;
And by its wondrous power her Soul upsprang,
Just as the fabled Stone to Music woke
When Morning touched it with its wand of gold.

Another June, its roses counted o'er,
And seventeen birthdays Rosalaine had crowned.
The Minster-altars blushed with fragrant flowers
Wreathed by the kindly hearts her bounty blest,
And from the Tower rang peals of Bridal-Bells.

SCENE IV.—Early Autumn.—Bower in a Garden.

Poet—Sylvia—Song of the Rose—Hymn of Immortality.

POET.

Into the garden, Sylvia, let us walk.
The Robin sings among the falling leaves.
Here on thy bosom set this fresh-culled Rose,
So white, it seems an image of thyself.
The nectar-loving Bees in yellow cups
Of odorous honeysuckles lie entranced.
The kingly Corn has doff'd his golden crown,
And laid him down upon the field to rest.
Gold-wimpled woods in colours gay are dressed:
The trees their crimson mantles have put on:
Love-talking leaves waft wanton time away.
The glassy waves reflect heaven's sapphire stains:
The sunset clouds their gems of splendour don.
One Eden lost, another still remains.

SYLVIA.

I love the Jasmine better than the Rose;
Its starry leaves such modest grace disclose.
So meek, so chaste, so gentle, and so white,
It seems an earthly Star of rare delight.
Consumption rings my death-knell, love, I fear,
Though Hope still whispers that it soon may cease,
As might a rainbow's radiant arch appear
Above those billows, *like the smile* of Peace.

SONG OF THE ROSE.

The Rose's life in seed begins:
Before the leaves appears the stem:
A blossom-crown ere long it wins,
In which there sparkles many a gem.

Its inner life is outward spun:
When perfected in seed it dies:
It ripens in the dew and sun,
Then wafts its essence to the skies.

The life of man is thus decreed:
The outward form alone can die:
The Soul from prison-bonds is freed,
To bloom in Immortality.

POET.

Change, not Destruction, seems to run through all
The wondrous works of God in Nature's plan;
The proudest empire as the smallest leaf;
The glories of the valley, or Mont Blanc;
The puny rill, or huge Niagara's fall:—
And so it shall be with the race of Man.
Not for one moment is that scene the same;
Yet nothing can be lost. The drops of dew
Which fell in countless myriads on the meads,
And rose again kissed by the noontide Sun;
The red leaves swept in tempests from the trees,
And buried underneath the Winter's snow;
And every blood-drop rolling through the veins;
And every breath of atmospheric air;
In God's economy shall last for aye.
There 's not an atom in the Solar beam,
There 's not an insect on an Autumn bough,
But may Destruction's fiery dart defy:
And how much more the God-illumined Soul!

PASTOR.

The quickening Instinct of Perpetual Life
Throbs in the hearts of all. The Roman child,
As well as that of British birth, doth turn
Its bright eyes to its Mother's face with smiles;
And grows beneath her kisses into bloom.
Mankind are one;—the Children of one God,
With intuitions of Eternity.
The Pagan's dream was of Elysian groves:
Mahomet's code a Paradise revealed.
This was the faith that cheered the dying hour
Of Plato, Xenophon, and Socrates,
Foreshadowing Christ, the Love and Light of Heaven.
This was the music of the mighty harps
Of Homer, Virgil, and the Gods of Eld.
This was the gold that strung the living Lyre,
Of Milton, grandest Minstrel of them all,
In song a Seraph, and in thought a Sage.
Why do we seek to build of hearts a Shrine
In which our memories may ever dwell?
Why this dissatisfaction of the Soul,
With all the noblest efforts of its skill,
The infinitely Unattainable?
The Poets speak the language of the gods;
And Shakespeare, Newton, Wordsworth, Scott, and Burns,
Confessed the agony of baffled wings,

Like eagles straining skyward in a cage.
Brave Bunyan said his work had more of dross
Than gold; and Byron's Spartan epitaph
Showed a repentant spirit ere it fled;
Shelley said all his fruits of mental toil,
And short-lived hopes, were bitter at the core;
And Keats his luscious honeybells of Song
Counted but weeds. When dark-browed Raphael died,
A picture to the Pantheon was borne
Beside his grave,—the brightest of his brain;
Ere Death had struck the pencil from his hand,—
The dread unfinished grandeur of a God.
But ah! he bore a picture nobler far,
Still undeveloped in its rich designs,
Into the presence of the King of Heaven!
The greatest Soul that ever garnered thoughts
From all the fields by human knowledge sown,
Is but a dwarf on the Eternal Shore
Compared with what he shall be more and more.

SPIRIT OF HOPE.

How poor a thing Man's life appears!
Like a full shock of corn
Cut down by Death's relentless scythe,
Of all his glory shorn.
Hope folds her wings in Sorrow's shroud,
Faith's earnest eyes grow dim
Ere glimpses of celestial light
Athwart her vision swim.
Of all Man's loftiest thoughts and dreams
The execution ever seems
More incomplete than the design;
For the Conception is divine.
Oh! what a gulf between the thought,
And shapeliest work the hand hath wrought!
The Sculptor breaks his idol down;
The Statesman with world-wide renown,
And honours won by thoughts and deeds,
Dies grasping barren sands and weeds.
The Poet, whose seraphic fires,
Glowing images and desires,
Fall thick from Heaven as drops of dew
With threads of sunbeams quivered through,
Burns the poor offspring of his brain,
And weeps to find his toil in vain.
Who shall the pictured scene unroll,
The Drama of the Human Soul?
A glorious instinct ever burns
In civilized and savage breast,
Like the magnetic flower it turns
To the land of love and rest.
An Atheist only can be found
On false and artificial ground,—
A strange exotic overgrown,
A blossom petrified to stone;
A tropic plant, a serpent shape,
Half a demon, half an ape.

POET.

There must be Heaven! there must be Heaven!
Where reigns the Lord Eternal;
Where crowns to aching hearts are given
And Love for ever vernal.
There must be Heaven!

When dearest friends are clasp't by Death,
Our Parents from us taken,
The fairest flowers of Love's own wreath
Into the dust are shaken.
There must be Heaven!

But as we catch the golden glow
Of Sunset, when departed,
The beams of Hope may gild the woe
That leaves us broken-hearted.
There must be Heaven!

Good men oft falter, spirit-sore,
With health and fortune failing,
While robbers of God's darling poor
On seas of gold are sailing.
There must be Heaven!

By all the love I feel for thee,
The joy thy face illuming,
I know beyond Life's stormy sea
A brighter world is blooming
There must be Heaven!

SCENE V.—NIGHT.—AUTUMN.—THE PARSONAGE.

Poet—Sylvia—Pastor—Spirits of Hope and Truth

SYLVIA.

Beautiful and sweet star-rosaried Night!
Encurtaining the glen and woodland dim,
Where shines the Moon, a saint with golden locks,
Whose radiant sweep inflames the dusky air.
I know my end draws near; for in my dream
I saw my dearest Mother and my Child,
And pressed again one sweet enraptured kiss
On those soft lips ne'er stained by mortal words.
An Angel on a milk-white steed rode by.

PASTOR.

I do believe in Spirits and in Dreams;
But as diseased eyes cannot bear the light,
A mind by prejudice may shun the truth:
Oh! I would grasp the Saviour's crimson robe,
And trust His Love and Holy Word alone.

POET.

Truth is divine, where'er its splendour streams,
And I will follow it, lead where it will;
And with no craven heart or coward voice.
The finger of an infant Truth may move;
But a giant cannot stop it. 'Tis a light
That burneth brighter as we gaze upon
Its brilliant beams; and every living ray
Displays the glory of its Source divine.
The hungering Soul will eat Truth's precious food,
The Heart upon its dainty manna feed,
And with a secret bliss expand and thrill,
Till songs of praise the vast Creation fill.
As in the untracked forest's brambly wilds
A modest flower of bloom and sweetness springs
Without the care of Man, so often Truth
Doth germinate outside the Priestly walls;
But nurtured ever by the smile of Heaven.

SYLVIA.

It is the Harvest Moon we now behold
Gilding the summits with its yellow gold.
Sweet Moon, reveal the secret of the sky:
Art thou my loved one's Paradise of bliss?
How many gentle friends on Earth I miss!
Oh! can my sainted Mother, 'mid the blest,
Look down upon her only Child like thee?
Perchance, thou art her home. Oh! where is she?
I would not have her know that I am sad,
And that I feel the cold sod o'er my heart,
For all thine ark of beauty. She would weep
Even in God's sight, and break her heart in Heaven,
When thou hast westered to thy day of bliss.
Search out my Angel-Mother near the Throne:
Speak of me kindly as I think of thee.

SPIRIT OF HOPE.

Soon shall we see a fiery Comet's flight.
Perchance the Earth may flutter, like a moth,
Too near its blaze, and burn her beauteous wings.
What hath she done? her cup of sin is full.
She turns her face into the dark to weep.

SYLVIA.

How strange that I alone that Voice can hear!
That I alone a luminous Form can see!
Oh, God! I pray Thee from my woman's heart
To burn the crime-stained thrones of guilty Kings,
Whose pageantry from lowly Labour springs,
With lightning stroke Wrong's iron crown to smite,
Throughout thy world enthrone the Truth and Right;
But spare, for Love's sweet sake, the early Earth!
Once, when a child, I trod upon a worm,
With careless footstep, on the garden-path;
And as I saw the poor thing writhe I wept.
And has not God more pity than His child,
That He should burn this Planet young and fair?
Oh! it might be a bright angelic bower.

SPIRIT OF TRUTH.

Alas! it is defiled with sin and woe:
'Tis red with guilt and shame. Oh! let it go.
Its glory is like Absalom's of old,
In lowest pits of carnal pleasure rolled;
Yet round and round it in a circle whirls,
Till God shall hang its beauty by the curls.
It might be beautiful and pure and good:
It asks for balm, but is baptized in blood.

SYLVIA.

Well worthy of its Maker Earth might be,
Were Man but true and faithful to himself,
And just and generous to his fellow-man.

POET.

To minds that clasp *Materialistic* views,
Art thou not too a Dreamer? But thy dreams
Are God's realities, and truths made clear
As if they were by natural sight discerned.
Have I not loved thee with surpassing love?
Love crystallized to thought and purity?
Oh! that my spiritual sight were oped
To see my dearest Mother face to face;
To see her smile as once she smiled of yore,
And meet those friends of Earth whom long we knew.

SYLVIA.

And our sweet Lily, precious bosom-flower,
Whose lamp of life blew out one chilly Night,—
The darkest God e'er sent for you and me;
But the cold blast came through me to its life,
And dashed it out. Oh! how I counted o'er
The pulses of its heart; ay, as a saint
Numbers her beads till Life's stream gently ebbed
Upon the beaches of Eternity,
How beautiful it lay in that soft sleep!
'Twas not like death. I kissed its marbly brow,
Put back its little dainty curls of gold,
And on its snowy breast I laid my hand:
Oh, God! but every throb of life was still.
The low, sweet music of its breath was hushed,
The pearls showed 'neath the slightly-parted lips,
And every tender vein had ceased to play.
Oh! it was like the delicatest flower,
Nipped by the jealous winds from Eastern clouds,
Which drops its crystal bells, and blooms no more.

POET.

A Dove sent from our ark, a drop of dew,
A bud of promise, and a precious pearl,
Wert thou, my long-lost Lily, lowly laid
In a cold grave, 'mid Winter's frost and snow.
The Dove shall yet return,—the dew exhale,
The sweet bud bloom within a balmy bower,
The pearl deck an unfading diadem
Worn by a King who maketh Love his throne.

PASTOR.

Were I the Lord of Earth and Air and Sky,
Landscapes of verdure, hills and fields and trees,
Halls, temples, palaces, and monuments,
And heaps of wealth in pyramids sublime,
The rich estate should from my soul be hurled;
For nought is real but a Heaven of Love.
Behold! by Man the Dove of Peace is slain,
And War's red sickle reaps a human field,
While every green blade crieth up to God.
When the young Goddess on Mount Ida trod,
In every step a lovely flower uprose;
But now, wherever Man his foot doth set,
The flowerets wither, and the verdure dies.

POET.

I love my country with an ardent love.
This England fair—this ever-vernal Isle—
I know her secret nooks by heart! I know
Her cozy hamlets, nestling down in dales,
Where rolls a surge of oaks seven centuries old;

Before the Roman wept, smit with her face,
Her beauty moving all his heart like Music;
But I have dreamt that her bright Sun will set,
Unless the toil-bowed Peasants of the Soil
Be lifted up to competence and pride;
Their foreheads lit with thought, their homes with joy.
Her realm with every luxury abounds;
Oh! why should any feel the pangs of want?
Yet Wealth reposes on its beds of down,
In mansions throbbing to the dance and song,
And listens to the wailings of the Poor,
As to the murmuring of bees 'mong flowers,
Which lull to sleep its unregarding ears.

SYLVIA.

Sow in the Soul one seed of thought, and lo!
How it dilates, and rises o'er the din
Of congregated crowds in Cities vast,
With Angel-Friends companioned evermore!
The Prison to a Palace seems transformed;
The mind on rich ethereal manna feeds,—
A Festival that might allure the gods.

PASTOR.

Such is the Poet's mission, while he seems
An earthly creature full of heavenly dreams:
His body is in one world, and his heart
Is in another, where the Fairies dwell.
Grief is his cradle, Poverty his nurse,
Want is his patron, Death his dearest friend.
Those who are toiling up the star-crowned Peaks
Of the grey Future, through the weltering years,
With bleeding feet and faint world-weary hearts,
Oft dash themselves to atoms at its base,
And on the beach they bleach—the slain of Fame.

POET.

Calm Summer-Night, how beautiful thou art!
Like some dark Chieftain with a silver shield
Riding a tourney, while the Angels watch
From starry towers across the azure field.
Flow on, thou amber flood! The wondrous Sky
Will soon be all aflush with golden flowers.
Like some white Maiden walking in her sleep
Twinkles the Polar Star,—the Sailor's joy!
Sail on, sail on, thou pearly-lustred spark!
Through the mid-heavens, and guard the home-bound bark.
Shine on, shine on, ye Constellations grand!
Ye are the same celestial fires that blazed
O'er Israel's King and Egypt's Prophet-Bards,
Whose choral chants in tuneful pæans rolled.
Oh! might I be thy Laureate, holy Moon,
And nightly thy Ascension greet with song.
High o'er the midnight Town I see thee rise,
Soft-silvering o'er the palace and the cot:
So weirdly beautiful and meek and grand.
Oh! then I turn from staggering babbling men,
By Wine transformed to things that fall and crawl,
And sorrow-stricken women in the streets,
Whose ghastly cheeks are coined to ghostly smiles,
To gaze on thee, and mingle tears with thine.

SYLVIA.

The grandest Poem is a Life well spent,
Without one vengeful act, one cankering word.
'Tis written not in books but gentle deeds,
Which glow like stars above the glacier-line,
And holy thoughts in lucid speech, that shine
Like flowers embellished with celestial beads;
On Earth remembered, and by Heaven approved.
A Life of nobleness, though lowly born,
Is Poesy's most true essential gold.

POET.

I dreamt I was a Poet, woke in tears,
And now feel thankful it was but a dream;
For I would be a stranger still to Fame:
And all I ask is, when I come to die,
That those I love may gather round my bed,
Commend my spirit to my God in prayer,
And let my memory with my body rest.
"Great things to-morrow," said an ancient King.
To-morrow dawned upon his vacant throne,
For aught he recked the jewels of his crown
Might like the common glass enrich the dust.
"Great things to-morrow!" oft exclaims my Soul,
And will till God's To-morrow gilds my grave

SCENE VI.—Spring.—The Verge of Heaven.

Poet—Sylvia—Spirits—Visions of the Spirit World—Guardian Angels—Dying Girl.

SYLVIA.

What realm is this? Where art thou, my beloved?
Over a bridge of stars I seem to walk
With footsteps lighter than a bird's soft wing.

POET.

Twin of my Soul, my second Self, my Bride,
Am I not near thee while the Angels wait?
Yon Earth to us has been a thorny road;
But it is past, its boundaries fade away.
What Shapes are these with vestments so divine?

SPIRIT OF A CHILD.

Spirits! They pass us like a golden stream.
Hear the rustling of their pressing pinions,
And each one wears a coronet of stars
In rare devices, which announce its name.

SYLVIA.

'Tis not a Shade, but Lily, my own Child,
Away she flashed ere I had time to speak;
I kissed her rosy lips, and they were warm.
She breathes, she lives; she called me by my name.

POET.

Oh, whither are ye bent, on pinions swift,
Vicegerents from those Crystal Citadels?
Ye volant Angels, with your votive garlands
Of dewy Amaranths and Asphodels,
Fly ye to earth on embassies Divine?

SPIRIT OF TRUTH.

The last King 's on his death-bed. He hath sought
To lord dominion over half the world:
Long did he ride upon the Nation's neck,
Which yearned to rear him off, and break in twain
The grinding bit, and pawed the ground to win
At one impetuous bound the race of Freedom.
As Life drifts down the rapids of Despair,
His wild eyes roll upon an empire lost,
While all his subjects hold a jubilee.
A King's robe is the wide world's winding-sheet.
On yonder Earth no King again shall reign,
And crush the free life of its fruitful lands.
The scanty veins of Toil are slowly bled
Into a golden flood, and deftly coined
To purchase pensions for an idle crowd
Of youngling princes setting up in life,
Who tour from flower to flower in search of joy.
Around his bankrupt kingdom hover men
On plunder bent, with black barbaric eyes,
Like Vultures o'er a Lion slain in sleep.
Her gorgeous palaces of Kings and Queens
By strangers' feet are trod, who jeer her name,
And mock her downfall. Her gem-splendoured crown
And jewelled throne are crushed to dust like sand,
And loathsome reptiles crawl along her courts
And ruined temples with lascivious mirth.
She is an orphan empire, and she lies
A withered Rose beneath the awful stars.
Yet shall she rise resplendent from the waves
Of War, which roll up-crimsoning to her shores.
Her Government's foundation shall be laid
Inviolate upon the People's will,
Whose sovereign Majesty shall rule the world,
Admired of angels. All her forest trees
Shall sway melodiously their leafy boughs,
And rich-eared harvests o'er the valleys reel;
Love, Peace, and Plenty, oil and wine and corn,
Shall be the birthright of each child new-born.

POET.

'Tis said he went to war in God's great name,
To save Religion from the scoffs and jeers
Of fierce barbarians. 'Tis the trick of Kings,
Who, never famous for their holiness,
Rush into war Religion to defend.
He gave his Battle-steed the slaughter-reins
Which, lacerated with his royal spurs,
Leapt o'er the edge of an abyss unseen.

SYLVIA.

Oh, how I *pity him his fearful doom!*
We may not know what wild Occasion blew
His flags to battle and unfurled his sails.
'Tis not a happy fate to be a King.
But I have read of Kings with natures kind,
Lives sweet and manners noble; but the world,
Not always clear in judgment, loved them not.
And Queens have lived of such exalted grace,
Of such enduring love and faithfulness,
That I could bless them with my dying lips.

POET.

Sylvia, thou hast a heart of boundless love,
And wouldst take pity even on Lucifer,
The proud angelic Anarch of the Pit,
Whose years he measures with his withered worlds.
If souls like that old Monarch's entered Heaven,
The precious flowers would perish in his breath.
The granite rocks that peer above the lake
Of Fire were Islands of sweet soothing rest,
A peaceful pillow to his burning brow,—
Compared to those all-verdurous groves of joy.
The sultry surge of passion stormed his heart,
And every human vestige swept away;
He stood between the planet and the sun,
And Night, in starless darkness, shrouded all.
Inexorable Death was sad for him,
So strong was his tenacity of Life.

SYLVIA.

Give me a King! There's nothing like a King,
Unless it be a sweet majestic Queen,
Whose softer splendour gilds the world with fame.
The Four Estates are bulwarks of the realm;
For them my wreath of evergreens I twine,
And they have crowned my England's royal land
With honour, affluence, and prosperity;
And, more than all, upon her bead-roll strung
Illustrious names, co-eval with All-Time;
Chivalrous heroes famed for Knightly deeds.
She still is young and strong and beautiful
As when her Maker moulded her sublime,
With lion-limbs and aspect of a god.
Upon her youthful head the Future's crown
Descends, enwrought by fair angelic hands.
Yes, she shall rise in memorable might,
The proud Palladium of prosperous Peace;
Her sea-like meadows billowed o'er with flowers,
And all her valleys laughing into gold,
And all her mountains clapping hands for joy,
The Lighthouse and the Leader of the world.
Cheers for the British Monarchy! Oh! see,
How rich, how wise, how liberal, how free!
Wealth, Art, and Science to the world proclaim
That she is governed prudently and well,
Blest with a Sovereign pure and Chiefs of State,
A Constellation of the good and great.

SPIRIT OF LOVE.

Love blesses, sanctifies, and suffers all;
'Tis perfect liberty and perfect bliss,
And antedates the happiness of Heaven.
Heaven dwells within us like a rose of Love.
God made Man pure in pristine innocence:
He walked a Prince through the primeval bowers;
But cast away his heritage with scorn.

But when by mediatorial Love restored
He shall regain the Kingdom he has lost.

POET.

That Kingdom! Where?

SPIRIT OF LOVE.

Man's own lost heart within,—
Light, Life, and Holiness.

SYLVIA.

How sweet is Truth!
When no Traditions cloud its lucid beams,
And Reason's arm supports the vine of Faith,
Doubt shall relax on hearts his iron grip;—
The specious Serpent evermore that creeps,
Trailing its slime where grows the Tree of Life
And flows the River of God. But Faith, sweet Faith,
Hath ever strung the Poet's harp with gold,
And nerved the Hero's heart to noble deeds.
By Faith the Martyrs laid their meek heads down
On flames which seemed like beds of rosy flowers,
On which, like infants tired, they sank to sleep.
Yes, Faith has ever been chief actor in
The Drama of Ages. Consecrated Lies,
Like gods carved out of stone, fell to the dust,
And no star shrivelled up. The Truth was throned,
And no sun darkened. Strong Faith moves the World.

POET.

Then Heaven is not a Fable or a Dream.
New senses will be opened in the Soul,
Regenerated by celestial fire,
Which purifies each feeling and desire;
And He dwells in us and we dwell in Him;
He is the root of every flower of joy.
No pen or pencil ever can portray
That happy state wherein the Soul shall soar,
From all material incrustations freed;
But as a Bird that lives on light and song,
From bloom to bloom for ever flies along;
Or as a Star of glory speeds through space,
Nor feels its pinions weary with the race.

SPIRIT OF JOY.

Joy and love unspeakable are ours;
Suns, moons, and stars, and meadows rich with flowers;
Pearl-palaces, with pinnacles of fire,
Of essences so fine, transparent, thin,
They open to us as we enter in;
And sparkling founts from alabaster carved,
Gardens of floral wealth and grassy lawns,
With skiffs of ivory sailing on still lakes,
Where silver swans sleep on their folded wings;
Arcades of trees and avenues of bloom,
Orchards of fruits,—an unforbidden joy;
Grottoes and bowers and tents, with foliage clad,
Where all may wander with Divine delight.
The balmy air one universal kiss,
The sky one peaceful smile, without a cloud.
And every one is gloriously employed
Designing pleasures by the Saints enjoyed.
The brightest Seraph brightest crown doth take,
Who heals on Earth the saddest hearts that ache.
Coincident with Life and Love to God,
Our bliss we find in planning works divine,
Symphonious with our intellectual powers.

POET.

So that we grow into the joy of Heaven,
Softly and slowly, as a rose is blown!
And we shall scan God's golden-lettered scroll,
The virgin Poem of the universe;
The warm and budding Dawn, soul-homaged Night,
The calm ingenuous Day, with all their pomp;
And Fancy shall adorn our spirit-halls
With pleasant pictures, and our speech shall flow
Like crystal streamlets over sands of gold.

SYLVIA.

The depth to which the Soul descends in guilt
But shows the height to which its wing can rise,
If the circumference-line it takes be turned
Upward, instead of downward. Man's strange Soul
Some toy must clasp. It spurns a fatuous gloom
For novelties, and balances them all,—
A bride of love, or concubine of lust,
Dear devil, or bewitching angel, worm,
Or Cherubim. It plumes its daring wings,
To flash them in the sunbeam's blushing dawn,
Or down to swoop into a gulf of darkness.

SPIRIT OF MERCY.

Lucifer has no joy in holy things;
The arch Apostate from his Maker's smile!
Crowned with a Nimbus like the brooding storm.
By Pride dilated he unsheathed the brand,
To dominate o'er the angelic thrones;
And broke away from shining ranks of Bliss;
He would himself be God, or sink to nought.
The fiercest hatred burns a Hell within
The grand imperial Rebel; and revenge
With smoke and fire hath dimmed and scorched his wings.
He dwelleth among woes, and finds no solace
By margins of cool music-murmuring brooks,
Bloom-broidered rivers, kissed by virgin flowers,
And verdurous banks of streams and waterfalls.
The merry groves and joyous-glancing stars,
The choral harmonies of spheral orbs,
Angelic concerts, benisons of bliss,
The birds, the blossoms, and all happy things,
But tell him of the glory he has lost.
Beneath a cypress, in a murky glen,
Outside the sweet felicities of Heaven,
Him there I saw from yonder battlements;
The stately gloom of his dejected mien,
With mournful vigil, and eye downward cast,
Sad-brooding o'er a Snowdrop,—Winter's Child,
Nursed in the skirt of Nature's ample robe,
Which, like a homeless vagrant, naked stands,
To welcome the keen drifts of rain and snow,

Imagining some shadow of himself.
Pale orphan Snowdrop! Satan loveth thee
Not for thy stainless purity and bloom,
But that thou canst endure the ireful blast
Which crops thy crown of glory.

SYLVIA.

Who hither comes
With tears thick-dropping through the clouds like rain,
While songs flow through the amaranthine bowers?
Methought that Music waked no sorrow here,
Which oft on Earth bedims the eyes with tears.

MALE SPIRIT.

A poor lost Angel, wheeling round and round,
Her sin-bedraggled wings droop to her heel:
Her face and skin are delicately fair;
But then her heart 's too loathsome to behold.
Her subtle arts depopulated homes,
And ruin wrought, and this is now her fate.

SYLVIA.

Nay, do not weep those vain unworthy tears;
For He who pity took on Magdalene
Will set them yet as jewels in His crown.
There 's two to every bargain, right or wrong;
And God will hold the balance by and by.

AN ANGEL'S STORY.

Down in a dale of Devon I was born,
And still I love to hover round the spot,
The rose-hung garden and the vine-wreathed cot,
While merry birds sing on the scented thorn.
Nursed in the lap of Piety I grew
Beneath a gentle Mother's guardian eye;
A violet that blossomed to the sky,
O'er-wept by tears as bright as morning dew.
When life was at its prime my Father died,
And I was but an infant on the knee;
His heart-shaped tablet o'er the Altar stands
Within the village Church he loved so well.
How fondly to our infancy we cling,
When we have felt of bitterness the sting!
My beauty was my bane, my Mother's grief,
And I was weak, by Vanity beguiled,
And Love's romantic passion built a nest
Within the shelter of my spotless breast,
And all the Angels wept when Folly smiled.
When Woman's heart rebels at Virtue's rein,
She plunges on, remonstrance is in vain;
And o'er the precipice of Ruin hurled,
Too late she learns how cruel is the world.
A Lover's eye fell on me, like a beam
From Heaven. It seemed to turn my life to joy.
My heart ta'en captive in the toils of Love,
I knew not, in my guileless Innocence,
The glozing arts and cunning snares of Man.
So dreaming of pure wedded bliss, I spoke
The magic word which crowns the hopes of youth.
Well I remember when I bade adieu
To my fond Mother, and what bitter tears,
And still more bitter kisses mingled then.
Amid a burst of tenderness she sobbed,
"What is the casket *when the jewel's gone,*
My Cot without thee, Oh my darling child!"
And so I left her and my rustic home.
Alas! the fatal Matrimonial leap
Was taken, and 'twere folly to regret.
The mask that Falsehood wore was thrown aside,
And he who should have been my earthly stay,
My comforter, my friend, my joy, became
My curse, until I bled at every pore.
My Father's dowry squandered he away
In dissipation stamped with every brand.
From Manhood's zenith to the earth he fell;
Fell, like a star from heaven—its glory quenched.
Home from his haunts at dead of night he reeled,
His eyes ablaze with madness, and his lips
Livid with oaths; patiently I endured
His brutish violence and cold neglect.
He fled at length, fled like a guilty thing;
Whither I knew not. We had one sweet child
With angels numbered ere it knew his face,
And feared his footstep. Ne'er shall I forget
The night on which it died. Poor stammering thing!
I knelt beside it while a trembling spark
Of Life remained; and prayed him to come near
And kiss the Firstborn of his wedded love,
Its pulse now fluttering like a dying bird's:
But he exclaimed, "You and the child to Hell!"
The Demon's flame at last had scorched his heart.
Oh! if it only blighted fame and name;
Extinguished hopes of bliss in beauteous souls;
Dismembered happy homes, and health destroyed;
And swallowed fortunes in its crimson waves,
Yet left the heart's affections still to bloom,
'Twould mitigate fierce Indignation's rage.
I followed him to that great World of Souls,
Where in the Hospital he wounded lay,
Struck by some ruffian in a midnight brawl;
Obtained a Nurse's place, and wore a garb
In which he knew me not, and tended him
By night and day, a ministrant of love,
Till forth he went in strength's elastic grace.
And when Adversity its shadow threw
Across his life, with secret hand I filled
The numerous channels of his daily needs;
But that Fire-Fiend which crushes heart and brain,
Like eagle's pinions in the serpent's fold,
Him made a bankrupt of all earthly good,
And hurled star-towering Reason from her throne.
I followed him into the Maniac's cell,
Attired as one who speaks of hopes Divine;
Sweet Mercy's Sister. There upon the walls,
In intervals when Reason faintly dawned,
And his Artistic genius shone again,
He drew with charcoal each familiar face;
And 'mong them all a portrait of myself,
In girlhood's early bloom when first we met;
And then he kissed it, blotting it with tears.
I could not but forgive him in that hour,
And kissed him, too; for, Oh! I loved him still.
I had alone the power to keep him calm,
When Fury seized him in her wild embrace.
One fearful night he in his frenzy tore
The coif that hid my features from his view.
My hair rolled down my shoulders in a flood
Of rippling, radiant gold. I strove to fly,
But in his grasp was powerless as a child.

Deep in mine eyes he wedged his wondering gaze,
And knew me as his long-forsaken Wife:
For Reason was restored by holy Love.

FEMALE SPIRIT.

Hark! another Spirit Earth is leaving:
The atmosphere is filled with prayers and psalms.
An earthly Angel in her Father's house
That dying girl has been through youthful years,
Which many waste in levity and pride.
Beside her pillow, with heart-broken sobs,
He kneels and prays that God will spare her life;
While relatives and friends are gathered round,
She sings and smiles, and Guardian-Angels listen.

SONG OF THE DYING GIRL.

Death to the good is most beautiful,
With lilies we'll garland the dutiful,
Fallen asleep on his breast;
With myrtles and pansies and roses,
Entwine we the head that reposes
In perfect ineffable rest.

Death opens the glorified portal
To regions of beauty immortal,
And scenes of unspeakable bliss.
Bright as a Bridegroom he cometh;
His cheek like the red apple bloometh,
And soft as the dew is his kiss.

Dying is only aspiring
Eternally, not expiring;
But breaking the shell from our wings.
Mortality's prison-door bursting,
For fountains of liberty thirsting,
And Eden's delectable springs.

Adieu! oh! my sisters and brothers:
If I have been helpful to others,
I'll trust in the mercy of God.
If I have been faithful and dutiful,
Death will be holy and beautiful,
Like the first flowers on my sod.

SCENE VII.—SUMMER.—BORDER-LAND OF PARADISE.—GARDEN, BOWERS, MANSIONS.

Angels—Cherubs—Sylvia—Poet—Conclusion.

ANGEL AT HEAVEN'S GATE.

HOLD by my robe, and follow me, your Guide,
The azure carpet of the starry Sky
Beneath our feet, like beds of violets,
And overhead a roof of rainbows wrought.
Fear not, thou gentle Woman, noblest born
Of Heaven to Earth, to bathe man's brow with balm,
Thy privilege divine, though often scorned,
Or with most base ingratitude returned.
Oh! thine has been a hard, uneven lot:
The flowers of joy beset with sorrow's thorns.
Come too, thou Poet, with thy soothing harp,
Joy's inner sun, 'mid troubles dark, is thine;
And thine is nature's beautifying charm:
For Truth and Beauty are the wings of Song.
Oft from the haunts of men hast thou retired,
A worshipper at bright Perfection's shrine,
Like one who in a desert feasts on prayer.
Now let thy free-born thoughts on pinions white
Be lapped in luscious love and living light.
See! at thy feet the hand of Summer throws
Her garlands fresh begemmed with orient pearls.

SYLVIA.

Benignity and grace are in thy smile.
Have I not heard those accents sweet before,
Like one brief draught from Sympathy's pure spring?
This joy-winged hour is rich reward for all
Earth's unimagined woes. But who hath loved
And suffered not? 'Tis Woman's lot to weep.

POET.

Whe hath not seen some Angel in his dream,
All love, all Heaven, to lure his tender heart
O'er fiercest flints revolved to fairest flowers?
And what were life without that Angel-dream?
Each Soul creates its own ideal of Joy,
And worships it; and I too have shaped mine.
Oh! Life, thou art too short for great designs,
For ventures bold and purposes sublime;
And when the Mind is ripened and matured
By Wisdom, Knowledge, and Experience,
In that cold noon of Night, besilvered Age,
Whose beacons blaze on all the rocks of Time,
To warn us of the dangers of the Past,
And light the path of duty and of safety,
Amid this treacherous and terrestrial scene,
We drop like fruit sun-mellowed on the bough
Into the grave. The insects of an hour,
The unimmortal brutes, do often seem
Than Man more blest with all his royal claims,
Because they never feel the fear of Death.
Yet neither make they progress toward the goal
Of Infinite expansion, give no hint
Of aught Beyond, Above, and Evermore.

ANGEL IN WHITE.

And she is here, thy Love, thy Crown, thy Heaven!
Light as a feather is the yoke of Love:
Like Atlas it sustains a universe.
Remember what thy Mother bore for thee;
And didst thou never wound her warbling breast?

POET.

Ay, now I know thee, thou thyself art she.
My Mother! Oh! forget my many wrongs;
Forget then, and forgive them, for Love's sake.

How throbs my heart! Oh, Mother! clasp thy child.
My rocky heart is broken all in tears,
Struck by thy words of blame. Oh! Mother, speak,
And say we shall be joined for evermore.

SYLVIA.

When in her sleep my own sweet Lily smiled,
I oft have waked her with the gentlest kiss,
Imprinted on her soft and rosy lips,
As now thy kiss awakes my sleeping Soul,
My long-lost Mother! well-remembered still.
My husband, let us four clasp hearts and hands.
Here will we stay, and build a happy Home,
Near Heaven's own precincts. Fold me in thine arms!

POET.

Thy voice is like the South-wind, or a peal
Of holy bells to wanderers coming Home.
Oh! I have striven long to snatch from the teeth
Of the great World the glistening coronal
Of Fame, and in my thought-wan Orphan face
She tossed her proud head in immortal scorn.
Then I looked back on childhood's early scenes,
When thou didst nurse me in yon cottage-bower,
As Eve looked lingering back on Paradise.
And then I sang unto the peerless Moon,
Which steeped my pillow in white molten fire,
And tingling thoughts pierced to my bosom's core,
Like bees that lance a flower until it bleeds
The honey which becomes another's spoil:
Then passion and dead hopes me hurried in
The gulf-stream of Despair. Sweet Poesy!
That paradox—my blessing and my bane!
Yet with what splendour is the Poet crowned,
Whose music wins at length his country's ear!
Oh! if such flowery conquests wreathed my brow,
Were I a beggar wandering o'er the earth,
I would not give one blossom twining there,
To own the richest ransom of a King.

ANGEL IN BLUE.

My Child, these instincts must be sanctified
With holy Love ere they can make man blest.
The proudest Fame that garlands the worn brow,
Is like the bright rose on Consumption's cheek,
An artificial bloom. The blood that dyes it
Drips drop by drop from the heart's fount of Life.
There never grew a leaf or flower in vain:
Each is the sweet Messiah of a Thought;
Each bird sings its own song, each summer flower
Gives its own fragrance, and thy own brain-thought
Make thou the heritage of kindred souls;
And they shall hold thee safe from others' scorn.
The hearts of men are true Valhalla's-halls:
Task the great Future without heed of Fame,
And Earth shall bind thee with her Hero-sheaves.
Be not like those proud stately garden-plants,
Which never propagate; but like those flowers
Which die in seed, and leave rich shoots behind.

SYLVIA.

Yon beauteous Maiden, in her Summer bower,
Which overlooks the Sea that singeth round
The laughing leaves and sheaves of ripening gold,
Can never know how many barrier-rocks
Those crystal springs of thought, in music born,
Have dashed across, before the nectar-cup
The Poet's hand held to her cherry lip.

POET.

My fate I know; but I must sing till death
Each string shall shatter of my friendly harp,
Which lapped me oft in dreams, while Hunger's worm
Was charmed with music, till it could not sting.
Farewell to scenes I love! The moon shall rise,
And the procession of the starry Seven;
And wonder that these sightless orbs no more
Behold their saint-like beauty from my room.
All silently the Lily and the Rose of Heaven,
The Evening and the Morning Star, shall fade,
And Dawn with grandeur crown the guardian-hills
Which gird that favoured spot, my native Land,
When my unlaurelled head in peace shall lie,
No stone to mark my unregarded grave.

ANGEL WITH A HARP.

The tear-nursed amaranth of Hope ne'er dies.
Oh! rather be the glad and singing stream,
That dances 'mong the bright and nodding flowers,
Than the majestic river, rolling on
Through desolate sterility. Rejoice!

ANGEL-CHILD WEAVING GARLANDS.

See! the golden river,
Rushing on for ever,
Oh! I love its graceful motion.
Heaven's mirror starry,
Wilt thou, wilt thou tarry?
Or be lost in yonder Ocean?

"No, I cannot linger;
I am Earth's sweet Singer,
And all along my banks
I scatter fruits and verdure,
And with warm embraces gird her,
And never ask for thanks."

Speeding ever onward,
Leaping ever sunward,
Thy footprints are flowerets pure.
Over every fall and crag,
Springing like a panting stag
When chased by the pursuer.

Eternal Pilgrim thou,
Heaven's smile is on thy brow,
And thy robe and palm supernal:
Glide on, glide on, glide on;
And, when thy course is run,
Mingle with the Sea-Eternal.

A WANDERING ANGEL.

Oh! the Fiend of Fame is standing
By the barren Sea of Tears,
Pointing, with his jewelled finger,
Far across the briny years,
To the dream-built shimmering palaces
On the purple-glittering wave;
But the flashing strand of glory
Is a dark and flowerless grave.

The Future ever beckoneth
Souls of passion with its gleams,
And the wreck and raft drift onward
To the Palestine of dreams;
Like the famished Sons of Ocean,
Whom the Mirage of the Main
Lures to a Land of splendour,
Whence they ne'er return again.

SYLVIA.

Oh, Mother! thou art now insphered in Bliss,
Which is our Child, our dear, our shrouded love?

ANGEL IN BLUE.

'Tis here, with golden locks and sunny brow,
And loving look, handing their shining harps
To beaming Cherubim. It leaves the group,—
A Cherub gathered 'neath the Virgin's wing.

SYLVIA.

My Child! my long lost Lily! yes, 'tis thou!
Look on thy Mother, darling, I am here.
Oh, God of Love! it is a joy too great.
Do I still live, or is it all a dream?
Kiss me, my Child, I have sought Heaven for thee;
And thou art here; still beautiful and young.
My Child, I know thee by thy happy smile:
Thine image never from my heart hath fled.
Oh! hast thou often given a thought to me,
To me, thy Mother, Oh! my heavenly Child?

CHERUB'S SONG.

As Spring from Winter's slumber
Bursts forth in glory bright,
To join yon glorious number
I rose to life and light.
Through moonlight mists that shimmer
My image Hope could trace;
Through sunny lights that glimmer
Faith might behold my face.

Another Saint is stringing
In Heaven its golden lyre,
Another Voice is singing
'Mong the angelic Choir.

Another Bud is blooming,
Where blossoms fade no more,
Beyond the billows booming
Around the wintry shore.

The world was all too chilly,
And all too bleak the air;
Too rough the road and hilly
For one so young to bear.
There's one more Guardian-Spirit
To heal a Mother's breast,
Till she at last inherit
This region of the blest.

SYLVIA.

My Cherub-Child! and must this Dream dissolve,
As doth a rich-plumed cloud, in rain of tears?
Oh! what illimitable seas of gold!
Oh! what unmeasurable fields of bloom!
Oh! what innumerable happy throngs!
And, hark! what music, from ten thousand Choirs
Of tuneful voices, in ethereal strains,
Bursts on my ravished ear, which glows with joy!

ANGEL AT HEAVEN'S GATE.

Friends on the road to Heaven through hindering cares,
Approach! alas! we know your aching hearts:
You eat the bitter fruit of palled Desire,
And yearn to taste our sweet ambrosial food;
The Cup of Bliss filled by the hand of Love;
The Nectar of Beatitude and Joy.
Put back that black dishevelled shroud, thine hair,
Oh! weeping outcast, alien now no more,
Behold thy sister! Widow, lift thy veil,
Embrace thy daughter. Lo! she leaves the ring
Where golden fibres stretch from throng to throng,
And radiant circles spread from every centre,
With Chaplets, twined of never-withering flowers,
To wreathe around thy brow. Old man, advance;
Thy gray hairs all transfigured into gold,
Thy sight restored, thy limbs for ever young;
For that which cannot die, can ne'er grow old.
Love, the Immortal, takes thee by the hand.
Look on thy son, that poor lame Boy of yore,
Who suffered pangs no angel-tongue can tell,
Yet kept his heart as stainless as pure fire.
See! how his Mother clasps him to her breast,
Thy beauteous virgin Bride. Come join the ring!
The Pastor and his flock—a precious charge—
In Canaan meet o'er Jordan's rushing flood,
'Neath the unchequered sunshine of the Cross.
The rare device of every Star that shines,
Of every Gate of Joy, of every Shrine,
The monogram of every ransomed Saint,—
Is the symbolic and triumphant Cross.

SYLVIA.

God's love is the Enigma of the blessed:
I hear it whispering in the quivering leaves

Of dark Gethsemane, like a plaintive wail,
The trembling grass uplifting tearful eyes
In prayer to Heaven that the Cup might pass,
Drugged with fierce wrath, and dashed with bitterness.
As if a thunder-cloud were hovering nigh,
The birds were hushed upon their shuddering boughs;
The flowers crept in their cells, and shut their leaves,
So black that hour of agonized Despair;
The winds stood still to catch the Martyr's cry
Which shook the world; the sun-flower darkened,
As if a blight had nipped its noble leaves;
The brooks had ceased to babble; all was hush!
And Angels met in council o'er the scene—
The tragic Drama of redeeming love—
In mute astonishment. The Stars dropped balm,
And every leaf wept like a human thing;
The parched Earth cracked, as if a sudden ague
Its limbs convulsed; the breathless Sky looked down
In pity as a Mother o'er her child,
And wondering wept to see that punctured brow,—
Those guiltless hands and feet with purple dyed.
The Cup was drained; but, O! the crowning Love
Was the exultant shout on Calvary!
When the red Sun's bejewelled chariot urged
Its rolling axles where the Saviour died,
To bear the Jubilee from world to world.
The golden-armoured Stars at eve came forth,
Like soldiers when their Chief in battle dies:
They wept to see the anguish of their Lord,
And hid their pallid faces in a shroud.
Then Mercy's pearly gate was open flung
To give admission to a guilty World.

GUARDIAN ANGEL.

To every bosom-flower that heavenward grows,
Rooted in earth, a token bear from me
Of deathless Love from the Redeemer's heart.

SYLVIA.

My heart is lighter now. My Mother's heart
Was full of love as are the stars with light:
For every pulse was love. We laid her low
In the grave, where daisies oped their loving eyes,
And then it seemed her love still breathed in flowers;
They chide me when I visit that green spot,
For they stand tearfully by her day and night,
Where I so seldom weep. God bless thee, flower!
For thou hast hallowed many a Mother's grave
With truer love than human hearts can feel;
So transient is the memory of the dead.
When Death unlocks the casket of my heart,
Oh! be one spot transferred from the cold grave
And grim red worm,—that holy spot on which
My Mother's name is writ in countless tears.

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

We live for evermore! Hosannah sing!
He was our Saviour, He is now our King.
Strains of angelic melody prolong!
To the Most High be glory, is our song.
Glorify Him, and adore Him,
Every ransomed soul,
Saints and Angels bow before Him,
While the Ages roll.

GUARDIAN ANGEL.

Children of Time, Oh! marvel not to learn
Heaven hath its uses, and the brightest saint,
Ablaze with holiness, not idly spends
A dull Eternity of languid hours;
But all to mortals have a mission given,
To warn, to soothe, to counsel, or to guard.
We wear the Form celestial, holy, pure,
Teach, and are taught, in languages Divine:
Through every cycle of angelic worlds
We perforate some chosen vein of Work;
And higher still than Gabriel's wing can soar,
Ascends the harmony of rejoicing spheres.
Use permeates all, and fills all Heaven with Joy.
Our spirit-work is crystalised by Love,
Which hallows every deed by God inspired.
Life is a holy Sabbath crowned with praise:
Our joys are many as the flowers and stars,
For every respiration is a joy.

POET.

See! Sylvia, see! a flood of Glory rolled,
And in the midst a beatific Form;
And o'er its head a rainbow 'graved with gold,—
"The Just made perfect!" Rings the anthem loud,
In rich melodious accents from the Choir,
Enthroned in Bliss, upon those sacred Hills
Of Zion. Oh! ye blessed host, farewell!

SYLVIA.

Farewell! ye Spirits. Oh! a brief farewell!
Yes, soon again, from mortal garments freed,
My presence ye will welcome with a song.
Mother and Child, farewell! Faint as the bloom
Of dying roses, falls upon my soul
A sweet all-holy calm. Again, farewell!
Lo! Music into shapes of beauty flowers,
And every zephyr is a spirit's wing.
Scenes of delight and regions unconceived
By minds that soar beyond the comet's flight,
And distance farthest stars, Farewell! Farewell!

POET.

How should we live, my Sylvia, to prepare
For scenes so glorious and friends so great?

SYLVIA.

By doing noble deeds, for God and Man!
By Faith that works by Love! by Charity
Towards all who differ in respect of Creeds;
By making every hearth a shrine of prayer,
And every home a temple of delight;
By wreathing garlands round each other's hearts
Of kindly words, soft as the leaves of flowers,
Wherein Sincerity and Truth abide;

By constant courage in the cause of Right!
By helping Woman in all duteous tasks,
And crowning her with amaranths of gladness,
Till from her loins shall spring a God-like race
Of nobler men and women than of yore;
Till Earth renew the promise of its prime,
And, like the Prodigal in far-off lands,
Whose base ingratitude made demons blush,
Returning home with penitential prayers,
It basks within its Maker's smile once more,
While Angels hail it with applauding songs.

CHERUBS, WITH FLOWERS, SINGING.

Crown we the Dead for conquests won,
Immortals of renown;
What have the Living ever done
Deserving of a Crown?
The King may eat and drink and sleep,
The peasant delve the sod;
The glorious Dead have ceased to weep,
At home in Heaven with God.

The Warrior's head with laurel crowned
Must often throb with pain;
The Statesman, with his thoughts profound,
Knows that applause is vain.
Who breathes that feels not Sorrow's dart
Pierce through the aching breast?
But in the grave the weary heart
For ever is at rest.

Then crown the Dead, the happy Dead,
The Husband and the Bride,
The Mother and her Infant fled,
And sleeping side by side.
The heart, the heart that glowed with love,
Is still and cold as clay;
But Fire, enkindled from above,
Can melt the ice away.

There let the scented Woodbine climb,
And there the Robin sing,
The lofty Rose, the lowly Thyme,
The Snowdrop sweetly spring
The Sepulchre's deep dark abyss
Fling Beauty's mantle o'er,
To show a fairer world than this
Is theirs for evermore.

POET.

Dear Poesy! fair daughter of the skies!
Courting the Muses, what fond dreams arise!
Enchantress sweet! with hope I woo thy smile.
My heart is thine, to break it or beguile;
The pleasure of thy worshipper's wild Dream
Not worth the penalty doth often seem;
But thou dost flatter with such charming grace,
That all must love thee who behold thy face;
Though thou shouldst doom me in despair to bleed,
One smile of thine were recompense indeed.

Deeply I love thee, yet I know not why;
For thou seems't like a Seraph in the sky,
So far beyond my lowly, dazzled gaze,
I shrink before the glory of thy blaze.
Thine is a witchery, I know too well,
While Life shall last I cannot break the spell;
But thou wilt pity whom thou canst not heal:
For holy is the passion that I feel.
On Sorrow's stem Fame's thorny roses bloom;
But mine shall be a lone unlaurelled tomb.

Thy music breathes within my Spirit's core,
And struggles for expression evermore.
I know not whence it comes, or where it goes;
But in my Dreams by night and day it flows.
Within the temple or the busy mart,
It seems to stir with angel-wings my heart,
And these, Oh! these, are, 'mid the World's rude strife,
The best and happiest moments of my life.

Perchance there's feeling in each Flower that springs,
And every Bird enjoys the song it sings.
The Skylark, Spring's first chorister of love;
The Nightingale, the hermit of the grove;
And every little warbler on the spray,
Methinks is happy 'mid the glee of May.

The Child, delighted with its coral, plays;
The Bard loves, too, the jingle of his lays;
And Nature bids his thrilling bosom glow
With all the raptures Beauty can bestow.
Repays him with the gladness which she brings,
The priest of Him who reigns the King of Kings.

What various tints the Summer flowers adorn!
From Roses reddening like the blushing Morn,
To Lilies whiter than the virgin snow;
And which are fairest Angels only know.
Not all the Stars with equal lustre shine,
And yet each point of light may be a shrine,
Where the devoted Poet bends to weep,
Or beacon-light above the stormy deep.

So Poesy assumes ten thousand forms;
Yet is one spirit both in calms and storms.
'Tis like the perfume of exquisite flowers,
The starry peace of Heaven's cerulean bowers.
'Tis like the music of the Summer-birds;
'Tis like of infancy the prattling words:
It lulls tempestuous passions into calm,
Bedews the spirit with celestial balm.
Its special province is to charm and cheer,
To paint a rainbow in the falling tear,
To gild the precincts of Affection's Home,
To bid the weary Wanderer cease to roam.
It hallows all the thoughts of hopeful youth,
The keystone of its moral arch is Truth;
Blest Almoner of gracious gifts below,
The grand Catholicon of human woe.

Whom do I love, of all the tuneful throng
Who melodise the Universe with song?
For there are Bards in these degenerate days,
'Twere folly to exalt and vain to praise;
They so enlarge the heart, the mind expand,
Like evening shadows in an Eastern land.
Some whose bright talents never bowed to power,
Nor flashed the meteor of an idle hour,

Whose inspirations knew no formal art,
The warm outgushings of the earnest heart:
Who owned no flag but Freedom's, far-unfurl'd,
No creed but Love, no temple but the World.
And as the Lark, which loves from yon retreat
At Dawn to rise the god of Joy to meet,
Is snared, and taken from its nest away,
Yet sings its gladness through the live-long day;
So, when Misfortune chains the Poet's wing,
His Spirit in captivity will sing.

I love the Bard with passion in his strains,
Whose Muse allures me to the fields and lanes,
Where Beauty blooms away from haunts of men,
By rills that ripple through the sunny glen,
Among the lakes begirt with mountains high,
Clothed with the sun-hued drapery of the Sky:
In every breeze that nestles in the tree,
And every starbeam o'er the tranquil Sea.
Wherever England's rosy steps extend,
I gladly follow like a faithful friend.

"What?" asks the scornful Sceptic of the power
Of Poesy, the Soul's immortal flower,
"Can there be wisdom in a gilded Dream,
Which lures the Spirit to each wild extreme
Away from actual things by which we live,
And every thought to money-making give?"

What are the Pictures which adorn thy walls?
What is the Light that on thy harvest falls?
What are those billows which for Commerce roll?
What is that Music which enchants thy soul?
If Poesy thy sordid mind would shun,
Oh! close thine eyes to splendours of the sun,
Thine ears to music, and thy soul to taste,
And change thy garden to an arid waste;
Forbear to love the daisies at thy feet,
Nor kiss the lips of Infancy so sweet.
Bedeck no grave with fond-eyed flowerets fair;
No Wife's fond smile be thine, no lisping prayer.

Think not, ye Proud, whose hearts are made of earth,
Wealth without Wisdom is the greatest worth:
Unhappy wretch, most miserably-souled,
Who only counts his riches by his gold!
What though his coffers with the golden ore
Were fill'd, and press'd till they could hold no more?
What though the crowns which Kings have fought to keep
Were gathered up, and thrown amid a heap?
Oh! what were these, though they should swell and rise
Into a heap of Pyramidic size,
And he shut up with these upon some Isle,
Without a Child's pure love, a Woman's smile?
Then would he be so utterly forlorn,—
A thing that even the meanest worm might scorn.

Above the gold in earth that slumbers deep
God sent His flowers, with gentle eyes, to weep;
And Man must rend the beauteous robe away,
Before the worshipp'd Idol meets the day.
Thus oft, alas! the flowers of Love and Life
Are torn asunder in fierce Mammon's strife;
And tender hearts are broken, conscience sold,
While Misers build their monuments of Gold.

It is of Love the Poet best can sing.
Love is the breath that lifts the Muse's wing.
Love unreturned makes desolate the breast;
But Love for Love as Paradise is blest.
Is it a sin to Love? when Love is born
Of heavenly joy—a rose without a thorn?
'Twas Heaven itself whose signet there imprest
That strongest passion of the human breast.
And Oh! how sweet the tender tale to tell
Of one who loved, but did not love too well:
Who, like a Planet circling round the Sun,
Revolved in light, and loved, and wooed, and won.
Love, glorious Love, is aye the Poet's theme,
It flows like Music through his sweetest dream.
'Tis Love that kindles every pure desire,
It glows within him a seraphic fire;
Love paints the blush upon the Maiden's cheek;
Love bends the proud and elevates the weak;
Love takes the yoke from the Beloved's neck:
When Ruin rolls, 'tis Love survives the wreck.

Thus far with courage high and purpose strong,
Perpetual Life has been the Poet's song;
Angels and Men and Cherubs swelled his theme,
Which seems to be, yet is not, all a Dream.
This luminous central Truth hath been a part
Of every quickening pulse that thrilled his heart;
Proclaimed by Man's position in the prime
Of Nature, and pre-eminence sublime:
His faculties, hopes, aspirations, deeds;
His conscience, instincts, and eternal needs;
By contrasts seen in every sphere of life;
Endurance, martyrdom, and patient strife;
And all the glorious garlandry of grace,
Which in the Saviour's Life and Death we trace.
Compared with such a theme how fades Romance,
And all that Art and Science can advance!
Kings shrink to worms, Wealth to a dusty heap,
And Thrones are straws before its current deep.
Oh Thou who art of every good the Spring,
Crown with Thy smile this offering that I bring!

WORKING AND SINGING.

THERE 's nothing like working and singing,
For fledging with pinions old Time;
While Nature with music is ringing,
The heart should be chanting a rhyme.
Grief and idleness languish wearily
When Summer's rich harvests are past;
Working and singing, cheerily, cheerily,
These bring comfort and health that last.

There 's nothing like working and singing,
Flowers smile and lambs bleat in the fold;
The song-birds are love-lyrics stringing,
And honey-bees hoarding their gold.
The reapers and sailors are cheerful,
Their mothers their cradles made ring;
Then never be hopeless and tearful,
But manfully labour and sing.

There 's nothing like working and singing
For linking the heart and the hand;
And the ship of prosperity bringing
To anchor in front of your strand.
When music and toil are united,
They weave a pearl-chain round the heart;
Their marriage with joy is requited
That blunts e'en adversity's dart.

There 's nothing like working and singing,
In joy and in sorrow the same;
For beauty is everywhere springing,
And Love is but God's other name.
Keep time to the soul-thrilling measure,
And tune your glad voices to song:
Deliciously sweet is the pleasure
Of music while marching along.

There 's nothing like working and singing,
For Music 's an angel of love,
On wings of affection upspringing,
Earth's trials and troubles above.
We leave the seaside and are haunted
By sounds of the waves on the shore,
And songs which the Singer hath chanted
Will linger when he is no more.

There 's nothing like working and singing,
While Hope gilds Futurity's dream,
And Memory's dove flutters, bringing
Fresh leaves o'er Life's turbulent stream.
Work, work for the good of your neighbour
While heaven is sunny and blue;
Sing, sing for the worship of Labour,
And life will be holy and true.

SINGING, EVER SINGING.

IF you'd live a happy life,
Set the Joy-bells ringing.
You may sweeten toil and strife
Singing, ever singing.

Like true brothers play your part,
Show good-will and kindness:
Love unlocks the hardest heart
Long shut up in blindness.

Winds are piping in the croft
O'er the corn and clover;
Hear the Skylark's song aloft
Lightsome as a lover.

Nature's harp of countless strings
Thrills with tones of gladness;
He is wise who works and sings
And charms away his sadness.

Laughter-loving lips beguile
Many a care and sorrow:
The frigid face that cannot smile
Makes a dark to-morrow.

Who can love a brow of gloom,
Lips no smile hath parted;
Be like birds 'mid leaves and bloom,
Singing merry-hearted.

Never for earth's riches crave,
But be prudent duly:
What you *are*, not what you have,
Makes you happy truly.

Habits of expense will grow
If you bow to fashion;
Pride of place and love of show
Breed a dangerous passion.

Music, like a crystal stream,
  Flows from Heaven's own fountain,
A beautiful ethereal gleam,
  Like sunset on the mountain.

Singing wakes the Soul to love,
  Making toil a pleasure;
Wafting gentle thoughts above
  In quest of holier treasure.

Dearest Heaven begins on earth,
  Clothed in moral beauty,
Soberness and manly worth,
  Rectitude and duty.

Let affection's tendrils sweet
  Blossom, fondly clinging,
While your hearts to music beat,
  Singing, ever singing.

THE LITTLE WINTER GRAVE.

COMPOSED ON THE BURIAL OF A BABY IN A GRAVE WHICH WAS SEVERAL FEET DEEP IN SNOW.

OUR Baby lies under the snow, sweet Wife,
  Our Baby lies under the snow,
Out in the dark with the Night, sweet Wife,
  While the winds so loudly blow.
As a dead Saint thou art pale, sweet Wife,
  And the cross is in thy breast;
But the snow no more can chill, sweet Wife,
  Our little dove in its nest.

When our soldiers in the War, sweet Wife,
  See a comrade shot and gone,
No time have they left to weep, sweet Wife,
  But still must go marching on;
And we must go marching on, sweet Wife,
  Though our Bud be stricken down;
But those who strive to the end, sweet Wife,
  Shall wear the Victor's crown.

Shall we shut the Baby out, sweet Wife,
  While the chilling winds do blow?
For the grave is now its bed, sweet Wife,
  And its coverlet is snow.
Our nestling Bird has been snared, sweet Wife,
  Which our bosoms yearned to save;
And the snow falls on our hearts, sweet Wife,
  And our hearts are each a grave.

Oh! it was the Lamp of our Life, sweet Wife,
  Blown out in a night of gloom;
A leaf from our Flower of Love, sweet Wife,
  Nipp'd in its fresh spring-bloom.
But the lamp will shine above, sweet Wife,
  And the leaf again shall grow,
Where there are no bitter winds, sweet Wife,
  And no dreary, dreary snow.

AN EPISODE FROM REAL LIFE.

THE following poem is an extended narrative of the circumstances which inspired the composition of "The Little Winter Grave." I, and my wife, with our only child, were then travelling from place to place. I was an itinerant lecturer, and she was happier with me than when left at home. We were both very young. Wisdom only comes with years. Baby was ailing at Guisborough, a little town in Yorkshire. I was announced to lecture at Scarborough, and we set forth to walk over the moors, to avoid a circuitous and expensive journey by railway, and the road proved to be twice the distance we expected. It was, moreover, flinty, and like wedges, and holes for wedges. My wife carried the baby, and I carried a carpet bag much heavier. The snow began to fall heavily before we arrived midway. Shelter there was none; and we soon discovered how terrible was the task we had undertaken in walking, on such a day, a distance of more than twenty miles over a stony desert. It was night when we first caught a glimpse of Scarborough from the hill-tops, looking like a toy-house of the fairies, scattered along the valley by the sea.

AN Episode from my Life—
  I sung it four years ago,
In a little song to my Wife,
  Of a Baby under the snow.
One said it was very sweet—
  A Poet of great renown;
But here is the tale complete,
  To a riper blossom blown.

'Twas Morn when we sallied forth
  From Guisborough's swarded square,
For Scarborough's town of mirth,
  Over miles of Moorlands bare.
We seemed like the twain exiled
  From the Eden-bowers of old,
And we gloated over our child
  As misers over their gold.

Out on the rugged Moor
  Our tenderling Babe fell ill,
But there was no Mercy-door
  Anear those snow-mountains chill;
'Twas nursed by my gentle Bride,
  Our tears in a torrent ran,
And we were refused a ride
  On the passing Prison-van.

Hovered the Frost-fiend round,
  Sharpening his icy dart,
Our fledgling Birdie he found,
  And shot it into its heart.
Death, the pale spectre grim,
  From his sword the death-drop shed:
We knew by each stiffened limb,
  That our lovely child was dead.

Was it want, disease, or cold
  That our little Firstling killed;
Or was sorrow o'er it rolled,
  With its Mother's milk distilled?
We knew not—its wings were furled
  When the night struck on the Moor,
And I never dare tell the world
  The thoughts that my bosom tore.

Oh, was it a world of love,
  The work of the Perfect Mind ?
Did God look down from above,
  To human misery blind ?
Or was it a howling hell
  Which the rich escaped by gold,
While the poor were doomed to yell,
  In its flames of torment rolled ?

From the Moors we now looked down
  On Scarborough, grand and still ;
'Twas night when we reached the town,
  Which lay at the foot of the hill.
We saw Churches with gilded domes,
  Where the golden cross was set ;
And balconied marble homes,
  Where the joyous circles met.

Oh, was it a City of Gold,
  Like Aladdin's garden fair,
Empalaced where Ocean rolled
  His music on fragrant air ?
" 'Tis too fine for work like ours,"
  To my Wife I, sighing, said,
"And where 'mong its halls and bowers
  Shall we lay our Baby dead ?"

While the faint Moon sadly glowed
  O'er the sea-side rocky tops,
A river of people flowed
  In the light of lamps and shops ;
I stared in each passing face
  With a feeling of anguish wild,
As if on some brow to trace
  The thought of a dear dead child.

We knocked at many a door
  In Scarborough's queenly town,
For a place of rest before
  The midnight in snow came down ;
But all were "full," and we wept,
  A dead lamb no fold could find ;
But our little Darling slept,
  And heard not the word unkind.

Dumb agony parched my lip,
  Despair did my bosom whelm,
My brain staggered like a ship
  With Misery at the helm ;
While wandering by the strand
  I thought of a watery shroud,
But Mercy's benignant hand
  Was stretched through Misfortune's cloud.

My Wife sat down by the gate
  Of a Mansion, ill and tired ;
And the Night was growing late
  As the spark of Hope expired;
She rocked on her frozen breast
  Our Bird with a lullaby,
As if it had stirred in its nest,
  With its well-known moaning cry.

Still silently fell the snow,
  From theatres carriages sped,
And my Wife rocked to and fro
  In grief o'er our Baby dead.

Just as she reeled in a faint
  With sickness, a Woman passed,
With the tender soul of a saint.
  And found us shelter at last.

Our Babe in its quiet sleep
  Lay shrouded as soft as balm,
And the Children came to peep
  At its beauty marbly-calm.
'Twas touched with diviner grace
  Than when it had lived and smiled,
And Sorrow would leave its trace
  No more on our blooming child.

O'er the Sleeper infantile
  A blissful radiance fell ;
There lingered a rosebud-smile,
  A beautiful peaceful spell.
The fingers of Nature wove
  Its ringlets so fair to see,
And pure was its breast of love
  As the young swans wild and free.

In a plain deal box we shrined
  Its delicate little form;
'Twas not with soft satin lined,
  Its icy repose to warm.
From suffering it was freed ;
  Released was the prisoned dove ;
There was one mouth less to feed,
  And one Angel more above.

When the Funeral-day came on ;
  Two Mourners went hand in hand,
And laid it beneath a stone,
  In a hole filled up with sand ;
And when I've a pound to spare,
  And bright are the Summer skies,
I will take my Children there,
  To see where their Brother lies.

PRETTY LITTLE LIZZIE.

PRETTY little Lizzie was sent to the Mill
  Before she had learned to play with the flowers ;
From the bell's first chime till the wheels stood still
  She toiled like a caged bird away from the bowers.
    Pretty little Lizzie !
    Pity little Lizzie !
Oh ! Death kindly kissed her meek white face,
  And lit her gentle eyes with strange fires wild;
For Lizzie's Mother lay in the grave's cold place,
  And, oh, what a life she left for her child !

Pretty little Lizzie ! the Sun's golden rays
  Blacker made the shadow of her dreary toil;
For never could her eyes on the blue Sky gaze
  Without an interbreath in the long turmoil.

Pretty little Lizzie!
Pity little Lizzie!
As the Silkworm spinneth its fine soft thread,
From her heart and her brain her life she spun,
From the hour that she crawled from her low straw-bed
Till the rattle of the looms and the wheels was done.

Pretty little Lizzie no longer was gay,
Her Father ever loved at the ale-bench to be,
His curses stained the air of the holy Sabbath day,
And Lizzie had no altar by her Mother's knee.
Pretty little Lizzie!
Pity little Lizzie!
Enshrined within her memory was Childhood's prime,
When her cheek was anointed by her Mother's kiss,
And she prayed that the Lord, in His own good time,
Would take her from the World to the Land of Bliss.

Pretty little Lizzie grew sickly and thin,
She knew no tender prattle and no childish glee,
And she drooped very low, 'mid the darkness and the din,
As in the Town's smoke droops the young green-budding tree.
Pretty little Lizzie!
Pity little Lizzie!
Softly faded out her sweet sunny smile.
'Twas Mercy called her Home to the Sky so young;
Ere Passion's meteor-fires her steps should beguile,
And Virtue's virgin lily in the dust be flung.

Pretty little Lizzie went weak to the Mill
One morn ere the lark did the sungates seek,
And she crept to her straw-bed at midnight, ill,
With Death's own watchfire kindled on her cheek.
Pretty little Lizzie!
Pity little Lizzie!
Her Father staggered home by the Moon's pale ray,
But Lizzie did not tremble as the stairs he trod,
And he kicked the little corpse as it silent lay,
But it stirred not, it felt not, the Soul was with God.

Pretty little Lizzie in her shroud was arrayed,
Within a narrow box did her slim form rest,
And two pale buds were delicately laid
In her tiny white hands meekly cross'd o'er her breast.
Pretty little Lizzie!
Pity little Lizzie!
On her last hard pillow so sweetly she lay,
And around her young face such a smile was shed,
And her soft lips were parted as if ope'd to pray,
The good-hearted neighbours hardly thought she was dead.

Pretty little Lizzie will hunger no more,
She has done with sorrow, curses, cold, and snow,
And the soft Wind sighs and the Sky weeps o'er
Her little mossy grave where the daisies blow.
Pretty little Lizzie!
Pity little Lizzie!
Oh! pleasantly she sleeps where the Church-bells ring,
And the little Children sit by her grave in the sun.
She is where the violets grow and the Summer birds sing,
And the rattle of the looms and the wheels is done.

GENTLE BOBBY.

For sweet little Bobby
Toll gently the bell!
My life's pet and hobby,
I loved him too well.
His forehead shone brightly
O'er eyes softly blue;
His smile was so sprightly—
His age it was Two.

A beautiful model
He grew every day,
When he could just toddle
They took him away;
For his Mother was wealthy,
And gold is Love's foe;
Oh he ceased to be healthy,
And wasted like snow.

Ah! dear little Bobby
So languidly lay,
Forgotten each hobby,
And tired of his play;
My white rose, my lily,
Far-off by the sea,
His veins growing chilly,
While asking for me.

Like a bark from the haven,
Or bird from its nest,
Like a flower from the garden,
He went to his rest.
Snatched away like a jewel,
Or lamb from the fold,
By hearts and hands cruel,
Through cankering gold.

I went, broken-hearted,
To see him when dead;
Neglectful ones, thwarted,
Away from me fled.

Regretfully weeping,
By the blue box I stood,
Bob's little shroud steeping
In tears like a flood.

There he lay shrouded,
And coffined in gloom,
His brilliant brow clouded,
His cheeks without bloom.
Oh, God! to behold him
So cold and so still,
And I not to fold him,
And nurse him when ill!

His hands calmly folded,
So holy the spell,
Dear Bobby seemed moulded
With angels to dwell.
A green nook we made him
In God's quiet bowers,
And gently we laid him
To sleep 'mong the flowers.

A low-drooping willow
The hillock doth mark;
But he steals to my pillow
With kisses at dark.
On earth my life's hobby,
My cherub of love,
I know gentle Bobby
Will meet me above.

THE DYING MOTHER.

'Tis a beautiful fresh Spring-morning;
Draw near to the window my chair;
I wish I could walk in the garden,
And taste the sweet, bloom-scented air.
Consumption's pale captive, I wither,
And feel not the gladness it brings,
While zephyrs are playing with daisies,
And swallows are flashing their wings.

Come, take my hand gently, my Darling,
For thou and I, dearest, must part;
Consumption—dread vampire—is draining
Each drop from the fount of my heart.
The cold hand of Death will soon gather
These roses that flush on my cheek,
And methinks I can hear the stern Sexton
A-digging my grave while I speak.

The lilacs and violets blossom,
Flowers follow where May hath trod;
The blue waves are dancing to music,
A carpet of bloom is the sod;
God's world is an Eden of beauty
For all who have health to enjoy;
Oh, would I were half as gay-hearted
As yon carolling shepherd-boy!

Hail, rose-mantled Summer—glad season—
Thy warm beams shall lure me away
To blossoming lanes and green meadows,
Mid soft odours of new-mown hay.

The Corn in the valleys is waving,
The blithe choristers fill the Sky;
The bees in the heather are humming,
While here with sick fancies I sigh.

Bright Hope! over nature decaying,
Its merciful sceptre sways.
Oh, lead me along by the woodlands,
To bask in the sun's golden rays,
And read from the page of the Poet
Those songs 'tis enchantment to hear;
And I will forget in the rapture,
The cruel Destroyer is near.

I feel so much better, my Darling—
I thank my kind Maker in prayer.
Come hither, my dear little Daughter,
And twine a few buds in my hair.
Now purple and gold gleam the mountains
Far-off in the blushing West;
The Sun smiles a farewell of sorrow,
That thrills through my panting breast.

Brown Autumn comes reeling with fruitage-
The orchards are russet and red;
Yet still I lament on my pillow,
Unable to hold up my head.
God's bountiful hand scatters blessings—
His banquet is full and is free;
But I am consumed by a canker,
Like fruit on a frost-blighted tree.

The leaves whirl in showers from the branches
Bestrewn by the pitiless blast,
Like hopes which I fondly have cherished
And leave me forsaken at last.
Beyond the cold hills there's a refuge,
A home in the good Shepherd's breast,
Where the wicked shall cease from troubling
And the weary shall be at rest.

I've heard the strange music of Angels
Three nights in my chamber, I trow;
I know by that sign I am dying,
The dew of youth yet on my brow.
Lay thy hand on my heart, Beloved,
And feel how its pulses grow faint,
I yearn for God's flowery Love-kingdom,
Whose wonders no pencil can paint.

A pale-visaged weaver comes Winter,
And deftly he weaveth my shroud;
And the snow and the wind intermingle,
And knock at my window aloud.
I knew that his dark, stormy weather
Would thrill me and kill me with cold,
And long ere the primroses blossom
My heart will lie under the mould.

The twilight steals softly and faintly—
My Children, come, kneel by my bed;
One kiss, and the last one for ever—
You'll think of me oft when I'm dead.
No love can be like your dear Mother's—
And oh! from you, Darlings, to part,
And in the world leave you poor Orphans,
It breaketh, it breaketh my heart.

Be kind to our offspring, my Husband,
And let not their bosoms be riven;
Oh, teach them to pray to "Our Father,"
To meet their dear Mother in Heaven.
Yon crystalline snowflake will glitter
In the Sunset's bejewelled crest;
My glorified Spirit, in splendour,
Will shine in the Realms of the Blest.

SONG OF LOVE.

'Tis said Love is fleeting
As rainbows and flowers,
Like Summer-clouds meeting
And melting in showers;
A meteor flashing,
A rivulet dashing,
Then passing away;
A gleam on the ocean
Of fickle emotion
Too lovely to stay.

Oh, dismal delusion!
The Spirit of Love
Is not an illusion,
Since God is above.
If Love e'er could perish,
The faith that we cherish
In Heaven were in vain;
And the loved and true-hearted,
By death from us parted,
No Eden can gain.

'Tis better than beauty,
More sterling than gold,
Diviner than duty,
And never grows old;
Friends may deceive us,
And Fortune may leave us,
But Love is not riven;
When snows fall it singeth,
When storms blow it clingeth,
Its birthplace is Heaven.

'Tis Love knits the mother
With joy to her child,
In each man sees a brother,
Though poor and exiled;
Itself it forgetteth,
With soft tears it wetteth
The verdureless heart,
And joys that were dying,
And hopes that were sighing,
Like blossoms up-start.

Like Summer's glad roses,
Love's gifts are for all,
Like the light it reposes
On cottage and hall;
Like ivy enwinding
Grey ruins and binding
Each moss-covered stone;
While state it doth borrow,
It shelters from sorrow,
And strengthens its throne.

The king and the peasant
It wounds with its dart,
With kisses so pleasant
It heals the sweet smart;
From homestead and palace
It banishes malice
And smiles at despair;
No crown is worth wearing,
No hearth is worth sharing,
If Love be not there.

Pure Love gladly giveth
In fulness its store,
For one heart it liveth
Unchanged evermore;
A gem unconsuming,
A flower ever-blooming,
Oft tried but still true
A bliss soul-enchanting,
A tree of God's planting,
In Eden that grew.

True Love is the beating
Of two hearts as one,
Like music-notes meeting,
Tone answering tone;
Two Spirits that mingle,
In kisses that tingle,
Like fire through the breast;
Two lives that for ever
Glide on like a river,
Eternally blest!

TO THE SPIRIT OF RUTH.

Thou art dead, and I'm desolate.
Oh God! that thou ever couldst die.
And do I still live? Oh, madness! Oh, fate!
Without that affection's one tie.

Is thy bed in the cold, cold ground,
Where the snow and the rain creep down
To thy tender breast, where shelter I found
From the hard World's pitiless frown?

Hush, merry birds, in your green bowers,
Why revel 'mid floral excess?
Why bloom ye so gaily, joy-hearted flowers,
While breaks my lone heart with distress?

But I know thou art somewhere near me,
Thy spirit is hovering round;
And whether I be on land or sea,
My soul with thy love shall be crowned.

Thou com'st like a Flower of light,
And the shadows of Doubt depart:
Thou com'st like a Star in the silence of night,
To knock at the door of my heart.

Oh! Ruth, thou wert dearer to me
  Than Heaven, or the angels above;
My heartstrings only made music for thee,
  My Jewel, my Idol, my Love.

I am lonely now thou art fled,
  And our helpless brood miss thy wing,
And comfortless tears o'er thy turf I shed,
  And thy little gold tress and ring.

Reverse was thy nature to mine;
  Mine was Passion, and thine was Calm;
And thy saint-like Pity on me did shine,
  Like Peace bathing Madness with balm.

But now thou art gone from my side;
  Yes, gone in thy glory and bloom.
Darling, than thee I would rather have died,
  My heart is now only a tomb.

Thou hast done with sorrow and pain:
  All o'er is the anguish of years;
And I dare not yearn for thee back again
  In this world of trial and tears.

Thou hast crossed to those happy shores,
  Where the notes of suffering cease;
And a convoy of Spirits plied the oars
  To the Haven of joy and peace,

And amid those Angelic throngs
  Love tuneth the lyre of thy breast,
Earth's sighs are forgotten in heavenly songs,
  And the Pilgrim of life hath rest.

I shall meet thee, when storms are o'er,
  In those azure and starry bowers,
With the ransomed ones who have gone before
  To a higher Life than ours.

In Heaven, my Love, we shall meet,
  No more with Misfortune to cope,
And roam through its valleys, lovely and sweet,
  With our gathered young Sheaves of Hope.

Thou shalt be my glorified Wife,
  And the guardian of our dear band,
One family still, as we were through life,
  In the beautiful Angel-Land.

OUR GALLANT FIRE BRIGADE.

WHILE the City is asleep
And the Stars their sentry keep,
Hark! hark! how loud and thrilling
  Rings the cry of "Fire! Fire!"
And a thousand hurrying feet
Rush beneath the fiery sleet,
While the flames the heavens are filling
  Like a funereal pyre.

Mingled with the vivid flash
Is heard the pealing crash
Of the burning timbers falling
  In a scarlet shower.

All along the ebon piles,
Up the chimneys, o'er the tiles
The radiant worm is crawling
  In triumphant power.

Lo! it creeps from room to room,
In and out amid the gloom,
Wreathing its folds elastic
  On from wall to wall;
Anon it climbeth soft,
Flinging its arms aloft
In spiral forms fantastic,
  Fast embracing all.

It curls and circles o'er
The roasting roof and floor;
Every precious thing uprooting
  That its clasp hath caught;
Then its red tongues in the air
Flicker with a ghastly glare,
In mad glee upward shooting
  O'er the ruin it hath wrought.

Through the cloud-drapery screen
What spectral shapes are seen,
Borne on the hot drift surging
  With a hissing sound!
A Father and his Child
Lift their hands in pleadings wild,
From waves of fire emerging,
  And dense smoke rolling round.

Like a saint of beauty bright
Shines that fair child in the light,
His long hair loosely flowing,
  Quick flames glinting through;
Till it seems, amid the storm
Of fire that wraps his form,
Like an angel's glory glowing
  Round his head of golden hue.

At a window yawning wide
'Mid the lurid lava-tide,
Like a blistered huge mouth gasping
  For a draught of air,
Lo! a Matron and a Girl,
While the flames around them curl,
Are one another clasping,
  Shrieking in despair.

But the Fire-escape is laid,
And the water-jets have played.
Father, Mother, Son, and Daughter
  Safe, safe, already stand;
For the God who rules above,
In mercy and in love,
He holds both fire and water
  In His mighty hand.

Then bless those gallant forces,
With the engines and the horses,
Who risk their lives like heroes
  In their leather mail arrayed.
Give them an English greeting,
Those hearts with valour beating,
And shout, with lusty voices,
  "God speed the Fire Brigade!"

THE STRAY SHEEP.

"WILLIAM, you here? well, well, I declare,
Come, give me your hand, take a seat in the chair.
How goes the world with you?—when did you arrive?
How fares the Old Country?—are the Old Folks alive?"

"Well, Richard, I came to this far foreign land
In the good ship 'Hesper,' moored there by the strand.
With grass and with flowers Old England looked gay,
But some of your friends, Richard, sleep in the clay."

"And how is my Father, and how is my Mother,
Mary, my Sister, and Joseph, my Brother;
And Lucy, my sweetheart, who lives down the lane?
I hope soon to see their dear faces again."

"They are all very well, but changes will come,
And earth, you know, Richard, 's not always our home.
Love-links will be broken, and friends they must part,
We know not the moment Death levels his dart.

"Joseph and Mary still live in the dell,
In a Cot of their own, and are getting on well;
And both have got married, and Mary, with care,
Has sent you a lock of her dear Baby's hair.

"The old place looks changed since you went away,
You hardly would know it again, I dare say;
'Tis less like a Village, I think, than a Town—
Nought's the same but the Church and the School on the down.

"As to Lucy, poor girl, why, you know she was frail—
As a sapling that bends in the rain and the gale;
The blight of Consumption had struck thro' her veins—
She 's gone where there 'll be no more partings nor pains.

"She loved you, I'm sure, from the depths of her heart;
But I will not say more, as I see your tears start;
Only this—and the sooner the better 'tis said—
Your Father and Mother sleep now with the dead."

"What! all of them dead? With tears I am blind,
To think how to them I could prove so unkind;
I went my own way, like the Prodigal Son,
And now they are gone—they are gone—they *are gone!*

"I gave them sore trouble, through all my wild youth,
But my Father and Mother, I loved them in truth;
And oft have I thought, as I stood on the strand,
That home I would walk if the Sea had been land.

"And Lucy, dear Lucy! I could not foretell
How soon she would cease in her beauty to dwell.
I thought I would save up my love and my gold,
But now all my hopes lie with her in the mould.

"Oh, England! loved England! I would that my head
Now rested with theirs in thy turf-covered bed,
Where the Robin might sing, and the daisies might wave,
And the young Children sit by the Wanderer's Grave."

"They did not reproach you, Richard, nor blame;
With love and forgiveness they mentioned your name;
They breathed it in prayer at the Throne of Grace,
And great tears rolled down your poor Mother's face.

"They knew I was coming, and bade me to say,
If you anywhere I should meet on my way,
That all your transgressions by them were forgiven,
And they would be sure to think of you in Heaven.

"I've brought you two presents; they'll please you, I know—
A Primrose from Mary, a Skylark from Joe;
The Bird 's in full song, and the Flower is a gem;
They said you would think of Old England and them."

"God bless them! but Life is a sorrowful load
When you have no Friends by your side on the road.
I'll go back to England, a grief-stricken man,
And help them and comfort them all that I can."

GENIUS AND THE SIBYL.

THE Night smiled down like God's rose-tree,
Unswept by the Ages' blast;
Like fires on the Alps of infinity,
Heaven's beacons—the Stars—were cast;
And the Sibyl of Eld went forth to breathe
In the haunts of her old renown,
Awarding to one the myrtle-wreath,
Another the diamond-crown.

Oh! a wondrous gift the Sibyl hath,
Bringer of sun and snow,
Scattering flowers o'er the Spirit's path,
Or crowning with thorns its brow.

A Sculptor mused in his lonely room,
Despairingly and wan,
And never a Star glimpsed through the gloom
On the brow of that weary man.
His dusky eye glowed bright with thought,
As a masterpiece he planned;
And the Sibyl stole to his side as he wrought,
Like a dream of fairy-land.
The crown of a god was his daring aim,
And the Sibyl, who came from far,
Said, "Noble youth, thy life's bright flame
Will shine an immortal Star."

Before his easel, with canvas spread,
With pallet and pencil-wand,
Gloomily bending his languid head,
She saw a Painter stand:
His magical genius bade upspring
A picture glory-arrayed,
But he dashed his hand through the glorious thing
His godlike skill had made.
The Painter cried, as the Sibyl came,
"What givest thou me to dower?"
And she said, "I will give thee Wealth, and Fame,
And Love, fair Eden's flower."

A Poet sate rapt and thunder-brow'd,
Sweeping his Harp of fire,
Like God's old Angel, swathed in cloud,
And burning with awful ire.
The Sibyl looked into his yearning heart,
Whence flowed full many a tear;
She said, "Thou art poor—nay, do not start,
Only the night-winds hear!
By the light of yon Stars I'll read thy fate—
Thou wilt have dreams for bread;
Pity more cruel than fang of Hate,
And a Crown when thou art Dead."

WHAT IF BLACK ENVY BRAND THY NAME?

WHAT if black Envy brand thy name?
It cannot quench Truth's soaring flame;
What thou canst do, does not depend
On what is said by foe or friend.
There's but a mood 'tween smile and frown,
A step between the Cross and Crown.

The Winter's snow makes Summer gay,
The gods descend in clouds alway.
Be like the eagle in its flight;
Though death-struck it has felt the light.
Mount through the clouds—thy sunward aim
Shall change them to a crown of flame.

Regardless who may list its tone,
The Skylark carols high and lone;
The lonely daisy need not pine
To wear the rose's crimson shine;
To leave the world a Name is nought
To deeds of love and glorious thought

Fame's garland-roses cluster free
Upon the thorns of agony;
From many a rocky source of wrong
Bubbles the nectar-stream of Song;
And where Detraction's heel hath trod,
Genius blossoms up to God.

Oh there are bay-wreaths to be won,
Plucked from the regions of the sun;
Climb to Ambition's starry cope,
In God's light crown thy topmost hope;
Follow the Spirit-voices still;
No power can thwart the kingly will.

Spite of the World's baptismal fire,
To Merit's summit aye aspire;
No faltering lip, no downcast eyes,
When Truth demands the sacrifice;
Despair can only crush the base;
The valiant ever win the race.

SONG OF GOLD.

SILENUS, more than Shakspeare,
The World doth worship now;
To Midas, more than Milton,
We bow, for ever bow;
We joy in the shower of Danae,
With gold-leaf gild the fool,
We heed not God and the Bible,
The Devil and Franklin rule!
This is the story centuries old—
Pounds, shillings, and pence,
Are more than sense,
And Man is less than Gold!

In trees we now find *timber*,
And *fish* in brooks that sing;
In stones translucent *silver*,
And *gold* in everything!
The World is a giant workshop,
Grand, and grim, and cold,
Inscribed with "No admittance
But to those who toil for gold."
The grinding wheels of trade are rolled—
The steeple clock
Doth reel and rock
To the musical tune of Gold!

The man that's poor and honest,
Though dowered with genius grand,
Is society's true Pariah,—
Whom every one may brand.
We care not for truth and honour,
Metal too base and low:
How little gold-dust is needed,
To cover all stains, we know!

Poverty only is base and bold :
  Riches we raise
  On the breath of praise,
And spurn the wretch who owns not Gold.

A Greybeard cometh hither
Leading a fair young Bride,
His coffers are full of money,
His heart is full of pride :
Oh ! his silver locks will mingle
Among her raven curls,
For he is a rich old Miser,
And she is the queen of girls.
Like Spring's rose clasped in Winter's fold,
  Will lie her charms
  In his loathèd arms,
Bartered away for glorious Gold !

The streets are white with winter,
The city Seamstress moils,
On our backs we wear her sinews,
While drowsily she toils.
In a dream of food she falleth
Dead on the garret-floor ;
She wrestles with Fiend Temptation
And squalid Want no more.
The pauper's funeral bell is tolled !
  Oh ! better the knell
  Of the workhouse bell,
Than a life worn out for the lust of Gold !

A Murderer lies in prison,
His life-lease dwindles fast,
And in a vision of midnight
Two spectral shapes glide past :
One is a delicate female,
The other a faithful friend,
With blood on their moonlit garments,
Dropping from end to end.
"Back, gory victims !" he shricketh, "hold !
  My Soul shall flee,
  From the gallows-tree,
Through Hell's trap-door for Gold !"

Mammon is aye the vampire
Sucking the People's blood,
A yellow-faced cannibal feeding
On living hearts for food.
The gold on the tradesman's counter
Ringeth of truth the knell,
And loaded with golden lumber
Sinketh his soul as well.
Toil dies in the streets with want and cold,
  But worships again
  The faithless men,
From the Nero-ranks of crushing Gold !

Earth's bravest, fairest children
Appeal for pauper-doles ;
To pamper our greedy bodies
We bleed immortal souls !
'Tis Money the world that ruleth ;
Mind is a poor bright slave,
Denuded of all its glory,
Praying to God for a grave.

The potent Savage is idiot-souled—
  He rolls his wheel
  While thousands kneel,
And beats out brains with his club of Gold.

Gold is the curse and canker
Of every flower of life—
Of knaves 'tis the carver and gilder,
The demon of hate and strife.
We crown with garlands Crœsus,
While crime grows leaf by leaf ;
The world is a Devil's drama,
And Gold is the actor chief.
The saffron cheat is a masker bold,—
  Where should we be
  If land and sea
Were suddenly turned to glittering Gold ?

But oh ! there's a whisper telling
Of brighter days in store,
When Man shall arise in his grandeur,
And cringe to the rich no more ;
And only in God's own temple
Uncover his head sublime ;
Singing that song of Freedom,
To which the Stars keep time.
This is the coin that ne'er grows old,—
  Immortal Love
  That is minted above,
Not under the earth, like Gold !

THE BIRTH OF POETRY.

WHEN the first stars sung and the planets swung,
  Like golden bells in dew,
And the Storm's grand mane of cloud and rain
  Was shaken in ether blue—
When the young Earth leapt and her vigil kept
  Round Paradise, hushed in leaves,
        And the Angels rode,
        Like the sons of God,
  In the balmy moonlit eves,—
Was it then that the Muse, with her heaven-lit hues
  And her garments fringed with flame,
Came down from above on her message of love,
  With her wreath of eternal fame ?

When the Garden rung with the silver tongue
  Of the cherub Nightingale,
And the Lark seemed mad with its carol glad,
  And incense filled the gale;
When the gem-like flowers lit Eden's bowers
  By the golden-trailing streams,
        And the eagle left
        His eyrie cleft
  To challenge the Morning-beams,—
Was it then that the Muse, with her heaven-lit hues
  And her garments fringed with flame,
Came down from above on her message of love,
  With her wreath of eternal fame ?

Where did she dwell in her mystic cell?
In which Star-sphere was she?
Softly enshrined in a Seraph's mind,
In rapture's joyancy?
In meteor's mists and amethysts,
The Spirit of Light unseen,
O'er the thunder's crash
And the lightning's flash,
The Genii enthroned serene?—
Was it thence that the Muse, with her heaven-lit hues
And her garments fringed with flame,
Came down from above on her message of love,
With her wreath of eternal fame?

When God came down in His jewelled crown
From Lebanon's sacred steep,
And in the embrace of enamoured space
The world lay hushed in sleep;
As the folded flower in the warm sun's power
Doth beauty-empalaced spring,
His fire-breath ran
Through the clay, and man
Of Paradise rose the King,—
Was it then that the Muse, with her heaven-lit hues
And her garments fringed with flame,
Came down from above on her message of love,
With her wreath of eternal fame?

The pale Planets shone o'er a desert lone,
And the Sun was blank and cold,
And the melody from the bower and tree
Dropped dead on the flowery mould;
The Moon and Stars, in their saffron cars,
In shrouded grandeur sped,
No radiant spark
Illumined the dark
Of the Infinite overhead:—
Was it then that the Muse, with her heaven-lit hues
And her garments fringed with flame,
Came down from above on her message of love,
With her wreath of eternal fame?

No! the hermit sighed for a loving bride,
And Eden's scenes were dim;
The Nightingale, with its tender tale,
No music could wake in him.
One dearer far than Moon and Star,
Or Sun, or Bird, or Flower,
The chief delight
Of the Garden bright,
Not yet had crowned the bower:—
Was it then that the Muse, with her heaven-lit hues
And her garments fringed with flame,
Came down from above on her message of love,
With her wreath of eternal fame?

O! man in distress through the wilderness
Had wandered, lone and lorn—
A joyless thing and a realmless king
If Woman had ne'er been born;
At her kiss he thrilled, with passion filled,
That soared in music higher,
As the Harp of Stone
Leapt into tone
At the Sunbeam's touch of fire:—
It was then that the Muse, with her heaven-lit hues
And her garments fringed with flame,
Came down from above on her message of love,
With her wreath of eternal fame.

Thereafter Love his heart did move,
And his pulse beat fiery bliss,
As she hid her face in his warm embrace,
And blushed with his fervid kiss.
In the perfumed breath of Fancy's wreath
Their dear lives sped along,
The bees of Thought
Each sweet flower sought
For honey to hive in Song:—
It was then that the Muse, with her heaven-lit hues
And her garments fringed with flame,
Came down from above on her message of love,
With her wreath of eternal fame.

SAVED FROM SUICIDE.

'Twas a night in gloomy November,
Each lucid Star gleamed like an ember,
The Moon o'er the waters did silverly quiver;
With countenance faded and haggard,
A man to the City's bridge staggered,
And dangled his daring heels over the River.

With sunken eyes lit by the beaming
Of lamps, through the Midnight streaming,
He prayerfully gazed into azure infinity;
But still on the parapet lingered,
His garments convulsively fingered,
And murmured, despairing, the name of Divinity.

"Hold!" cried a Voice; "oh, what Spirit
Would thee of thy crown disinherit
In the music-roofed Mansions of glory Hereafter?
Through transient misfortunes and losses,
Wouldst rush like a fool on God's bosses,
And be for the demons derision and laughter?

"If thou, who art sorrow-beladen,
Dost grieve o'er some false, fickle Maiden,
Who roves like a bee in her kissings and vanity;
Scatter the links of the frail Syren's fetter;
Live on for a truer, a fairer, a better—
To perish for her were the height of insanity!

"Perchance thou canst find no employment,
Bereft of regard and enjoyment,
And Hunger's kiss whitens thy Wife, Sons, and Daughters;
Back from the gulf-stream eternal!
The earth is yet fruitful and vernal,
It is but an Angel that troubles the waters!

"Else Fortune has shaken her pinion,
And thou art no longer her minion;
And the feet of the stranger are heard in thy palace!
Oh, patience, and courage, and labour,
Will lift thee as high as thy neighbour,
And brim with the nectar of Eden thy chalice!

"Has Fame, from her parterre of posies,
Shook down on thy forehead her roses,
To mock thee beholding their loveliness blighted?
Oh, think not of them with unkindness,
Whom Fortune, not God, crowns in blindness!
Take courage, O Genius, thy wrongs shall be righted.

"Have they in whose faith thou hast trusted
Proved false, till with Life thou'rt disgusted,
And the world seems a cheat in its manifold stages?
Oh, rescue thy kind from destruction,—
Oh, spread the glad beams of instruction,—
And Truth's Ark shall ride o'er the Deluge of Ages.

"If Friendship to charm thee is powerless,
And life is a wilderness flowerless,
Look up at the Stars which rebuke thy vain sorrow!
Stand face to face with the Terror,
'Twill vanish! like mist from a mirror,
And sunshine will gild thy horizon to-morrow.

"The cloud maketh life's sunshine brighter,
The Soul from its trammels soars lighter,
And Sorrow and Pain are the Spirit's Evangels;
Lean upon God—His love waneth never—
He will attune Life's lofty endeavour,
To the canzonets, carols, and chimes of the Angels.

"If by Death's pallid angel have perished
Those flowers which Affection hath cherished,
Remember they blossom with beauty immortal;
Their dews are of crowns the sweet token,
Their perfume is music unbroken,—
Hark! how it flows through the glorified portal!

"God's blue Eye is smiling above thee,
And there be some dear ones who love thee—
Think thou of them who will mourn for thee tearfully!
The world hiveth honey within it,
For all who have courage to win it—
Thy duties await thee! Go welcome them cheerfully!"

One glance on the bright Moon he darted,
Then back from the parapet started,
And homeward he went from the stream of pollution;
His Wife to her fond bosom pressed him,
His beautiful Children caressed him,
And Angels recorded his grand resolution.

No longer his wild heart was troubled,
With new joy it danced and it bubbled,
He looked on the daisies with eyes laughing sunward;
The star of hope glassed in his bosom,
The dawn and the dew on the blossom,
While Seaward the River rolled hungrily onward!

EVE TO HER FIRSTBORN.

BENEATH the plumage of a palm,
Beyond rose Eden's golden gate,
From Summer's heat, and curious ken,
Down in the shadow of a glen,
Where lilies grew by waters calm,
Sate Eve, a mother desolate!
In many a rich and flowering tree
The merry birds made melody,
While, exiled from lost Paradise,
Eve read the radiant orbs of Fate,
With wonder, in her Baby's eyes!
Frail Eve! she lingered, like a nun,
O'er that bright rosary of Heaven,—
The dainty, starry stranger given,
Like a new Eden, to her heart!
Why do her tears thus shyly start,
Her sad face looking from the Sun?
A-down her neck, and o'er her brow,
Her long dishevelled tresses hung,
In unique tangles dropping low,
Her crimson cheek blanched white as snow;
But, while she wept, the wild birds sung!
Remorse had made her heart a waste
Till this spring-blossom crowned Delight,
As tempests nurse the snowdrop white—
'Twas in her eyes so pure and chaste!
A tempered beauty still arrayed
The fragile form of fallen Eve—
A riper bloom; yet, like a maid
Some 'thralled seducer had betrayed,
She leaned above her Child to grieve,
And saw within those violet eyes
A nearer likeness to the skies.

Ah me! I sit me down and mourn.
Affection's sinless early time
I lost by folly, and by crime,
When, with sad hearts, ne'er to return,
We left dear Eden's heavenly clime.

Alas, to sigh o'er Eden's charms!
I mourn not for those perfumed bowers,
Those sylvan streams, those rosy hours;
I clasp an Eden in my arms
Worth more than Eden's perfect flowers.

The Stars that trip in golden shoon,
  The Nightingale's enchanted psalm,
  The evening calm, the rich-leaved palm,
The chaste and love-inspiring Moon,
  To this poor heart could bring no balm,

Till thou wast born, sweet Bud of Spring;
  With wounds a-gape this heart was torn,
  All weary, worn, and sad, and lorn,
Like a Bird panting on the wing
  For that new-pulsing, crimson Dawn.

In thee I see what I have been.
  Because I erred in my distress,
  Oh Baby! shall I love thee less,
And dash with scorn the holy sheen
  Of thy untainted Loveliness?

This heart was then as free from taint
  As is the lily's silver leaf
  Washed by the dew; no shrouding grief,
No vain regret, no murmurous plaint,
  I knew in Eden's prime so brief.

Wisdom, without experience sad;
  Rest, without toil; joy, without pain;
  No thought of Death to rack the brain;
No slighted love to drive me mad;
  No bitter tears, like sleet and rain!

From God and angels, who passed by
  Those flowered paths wherein I ranged,
  For ever now I am estranged;
Thy silver smile, thy purity,
  But tell my heart how I am changed.

Oh! why is passion beautiful?
  Why do we haste to pluck life's joys?
  Why mingle love with base alloys?
Why should desire e'er pant to cull
  The sweet fruit that the Soul destroys?

To wake the Future time in this
  Was all my sin; with heart a-glow
  The glory of the gods to know,
I soared to clutch a starry Bliss,
  And fell into a gulf of Woe.

He came, O God, that thing of hell,
  As in those bowers I walked alone,
  Such low, sweet music in his tone!
Oh, weak of heart! I ate, and fell;
  But was the vileness all mine own?

Sin swept of joy my bosom bare,
  And here I linger, anguish-bowed;
  But star-like, from life's evil cloud,
My Child is born, so pure, so fair:
  The curse ne'er struck my angel-browed.

No lovelier Bud the world could give
  Before these lips had touched the fruit;
  Perchance there strikes a deeper root
Of sin within thy heart to live,
  And rise to blast Love's golden shoot.

Unlifted veil of life and time,
  O world, unvoyaged, unexplored!
  What shalt thou be, my Child adored?—
An angel fair, or god sublime,
  Of love the crown, of earth the Lord?

What shalt thou be? Oh! where the news?
  As heaven is mirrored in the brook,
  A Future smiles up in thy look.
Henceforth I'll weep no bitter dews;
  This heart for joy hath still a nook!

What sunny smiles flush o'er thy cheek!
  How rosy-veined thy forehead is!
  Thy perfumed lips how sweet to kiss!
What prattling sounds of mirth they speak!
  Oh! wilt thou ever be like this?

I see the image of thy Sire
  In thy fresh beauty, white and warm,
  Ere over Eden broke the storm—
His lip of smiles, his eye of fire,
  His noble, facile-moulded form.

Where is thy Father, child, whose frown
  Smote this torn heart, which loves him yet?
  That look I never can forget!
'Twas wondrous pity, cold as stone,
  Like love that waned, but could not set!

I knew not 'twas a crime to give
  The fruit of that too glorious tree
  To one so dearly loved as he,
Which was to teach us how to live
  As gods, and, oh! how blest to be.

A dazzling glory made me blind
  To Retribution's stroke of doom,
  Which withered Eden's golden bloom.
Forgive me, dearest! 'twas unkind.
  Lorn dove, to this cold bosom come!

He toils; and from each drop of dew
  That falleth from his brow shall spring
  A blessing, that shall blunt the sting
Of sorrow, if twain hearts be true
  And to the desert blossoms bring.

Ye springs that warble from the rock!
  Ye stars, thou moon, I joy to see!
  Ye winds that whisper of the sea!
Ye birds that all my sorrow mock!
  Oh! tell me where my love can be.

Oh hearts, that sudden passions stir!
  O loving breasts, that vainly grieve!
  Oh Woman, easy to believe!
Is it a sin to love or err?
  Is there another fallen Eve?

Oh! thou despairing, weary man,
  Cut not these hopes that clasping rise.
  This folly makes sublime and wise
This glorious toil, this exile-ban,
  The strong heart only sanctifies.

ny life, my love, awake,
› what thou hast been of yore!
. our child, and weep no more
n's wreck, for his sweet sake,
niles to bless thee evermore!

e my eldest-born shall grow
ıt another Eden's rest—
en like we once possessed;
to death the venomed foe
ruck his red fangs in my breast.

he grows to manhood's prime,
ɜ despise his Mother-nurse,
ırse me for that sinful curse,
me with a scorn sublime,
l my dreamful hopes reverse?

ly then his Mother's shame,
every wail I hush,
ake his cheek with crimson flush,
n his heart, and blast his name,
d the springs of sorrow gush.

of Bliss! in this cold nest
thee in a wind of sighs;
er thee from snowy skies;
hee softly on my breast,
ıarm to silence all thy cries.

aglet, all thy strength sublime
, and soar to higher things!
ze the Sun down as he springs!
no Snake around thee climb,
tter thy immortal wings!

›'s young tree aye flower with thought,
ıncy's blossoms wreathe it round,
eart the realm of sweetest sound;
, amid this dust and drought,
Heaven's unfading verdure crowned!

les play round thy coral lips
stal ripples—speech of thine
et as honeysuckle-vine,
ı the wild bee hangs and sips,
gay reveller quaffing wine!

e skiff shall onward sweep,
an eagle's plume a-gleam;
ple hill and prattling stream
thee to the land of sleep,
ıll thee to a pleasant dream.

the fair, ungarnished Moon
ıden bow bends o'er the Deep.
Baby mine, these eyes woo sleep!
birds, Oh, wake me soon!
ıall it be to smile or weep?

NEVER LAG BEHIND.

THOUGH sometimes you feel,
That Fortune's fickle wheel
Turns for knaves and fools, to mind and merit blind,
Put your shoulder to it,
If you've a soul to do it,
'Tis only to the brave that the goddess will be kind.

Spite of all your grief,
Leaf will follow leaf,
The stainless heavens above are ever glory-lined;
The flowers, the birds, the bees,
Laugh at your monodies;
God has built a palace, for your happiness designed.

In sorrow never rest,
Build again your nest:
At the bottom of your wallet hope is left your wounds to bind;
And when storms assail you,
And your courage fails you,
Look before you, and above you, Heaven is o'er the wind.

Fear not your Alp to climb,
Rise to a height sublime,
Difficulties dwindle in the majesty of mind;
Envy not another,
But make yourself his brother—
The eagle's wings are strengthened by the mountain-wind.

Envy never heed,
'Tis love that's run to seed,
And many are the vultures flapping in the wind,
Shouting, "Follow, follow,"
Over hill and hollow,
Waiting till you drop, your bleaching corse to find.

Rely not on your friends,
Success on worth depends,
Stamp each thought you utter with the impress of your mind;
Holding fast to principle,
Unswerving and invincible,
You shall win at last the guerdon, laurel-twined.

Still labour for the right,
Against the despot's might,
Although another's brow the victory may bind;
Who can quench the yearning,
For Freedom ever-burning,
Strike a blow for God, your country, and your kind.

THE VOYAGE OF LIFE.

THE Skylark is singing
Aloft in the sky,
'Tis morning, 'tis morning,
And soon it will fly.
Think of it, think of it,
While it is nigh!

The moments are precious
When Life is so brief,
They melt like the dew-drops
That spangle the leaf;
And yet they are pregnant
With joy and with grief.

To-day we are nearer
Eternity's shore,
Nearer than ever
We have been before;
And yesterday's moments
Will come back no more.

Its roses have faded,
Its brightness hath fled,
With that little cherub
Which pillows its head
Beneath the green hillock
That covers the dead.

Life's Stream onward flowing,
Bears first a light Boat,
And in it an Infant
So gaily doth float;
And an Angel attends it
With musical note.

A Youth next appears
At the helm, whose sight
Looks into the distance
For palaces bright,—
Of Fame, Wealth, and Happiness
Gilded with light.

And now the scene changes,
And Manhood appears,
'Mid rocks and rough waters
His frail skiff he steers:
His gaze is too anxious
And hopeless for tears.

Again glides the Vessel
On Life's rapid Stream;
Old Age sits within it,—
The Past is a dream.
Eternity's ocean
Before him doth gleam.

Farewell, now, for ever,
Thou Earth and thou Sun!
The Voyage immortal
Hath only begun.
Joy, joy to the Spirit,
If good has been done.

THE CROWN OF MERIT.

FATE stamped with thorns of anguish sharp
The Poet's wreath so fine,
The gold that strung his tuneful harp
Was wrought from Suffering's mine;
Yet he had many a rainbow-dream
To paint his sunnier hours,
Then Life went singing, like a stream,
Along a world of flowers.

His was a quickening power, serene,
A fire the Soul to melt,
To make it see what he had seen,
And feel what he had felt.
Within his heart more beauty died
Than yonder Sun can gild:
A crosslet-shrine, but not in pride,
My verse to him would build.

His hopes were growing on the morn,
And brightening all the sky;
His sweetest thoughts in pangs were born,
And nevermore could die.
And he had little mortal things
His household cares among,
To hang upon his Spirit's wings,
And lure his heart from Song.

Worse things a man may do in life
Than chant a note of praise,
And seek relief from care and strife
In Nature's pleasant ways;
As trills the Lark its morning-hymn
Half-hidden in the cloud,
Or when from woods and forests dim
The Nightingale sings loud.

He on his pillow dying lay
When Summer robed our isle,
And on his face the sunset-ray
Beamed like an Angel's smile.
His last words were, "No bays I've won
Worthy, dear Friends, of you;
Oh! judge me not by what I've done,
But what I meant to do."

And when we brought a garland fair
To wreathe his beauteous head,
A cold and marbly form lay there—
The Poet's soul had fled.
We laid him in a grassy spot
Beside his native town;
That he's forgot, it matters not,
For Love is Merit's Crown.

A SPRING CAROL.

NATURE'S darling Poetess
Is Spring—the joyous Spring.
Hark! her voice of loveliness
In the Skylark's throat doth sing.

There's a fire-flash in her eye
As she guides her sunbeam-steeds,
And, with leafy banners high,
All her Floral army leads.
Carol, carol, sing, oh, sing!
Fairest, rarest minstrel Spring.

With her dazzling diamond pen
Dipped in ethereal tints,
Every dingle, nook, and glen
With her beauteous hues she prints.
Sunbright syllables of flowers
On her velvet landscapes gleam,
And her songs in sparkling showers
Flow in many a grove and stream.
Carol, carol, sing, oh, sing!
Blushing, gushing warbler Spring!

On her cheek a bloom doth rest,
Snowdrops coronal her brow,
Heartsease blossoms on her breast—
Ah! 'tis beating, thrilling now!
Pale primroses pearl the woods,
Babes with dainty bunches toy;
And the pink-mouthed daisy-buds
Kiss her feet in love and joy.
Carol, carol, sing, oh, sing!
Youthful, truthful Sappho, Spring!

Gay she steppeth every dawn,
Hanging fragrantest festoons
Where the rocky chasms yawn,
While she chanteth merry tunes.
Round the feet of crumbling towers
Vivid mosses wild she winds,
And old Winter's locks with flowers,
As a child its Sire's, she binds.
Carol, carol, sing, oh, sing!
Sweetest, neatest virgin, Spring!

Her rich tide of verdure sweeps
O'er the meadows, moors, and vales,
And at night she dreaming sleeps
To the songs of Nightingales.
To make glad is all her fame,
Bliss drops from her honied breath,
And she laughs and sings the same
Whatsoe'er the wise world saith.
Carol, carol, sing, oh, sing!
Glowing, flowing songstress, Spring!

Oh, if with her dulcet voice
My untutored Muse could sing,
What heart-deserts should rejoice!
What sad homes with gladness ring!
I would gild and glorify
With sweet poesy my lot;
And a flowery wreath might lie
On the undistinguished spot,
Where I should hear her sing
'Mong the daisies, darling Spring!

OH, GIVE ME BACK MY ROSE!

FAR from the City's gay and giddy throng,
Beside a Cottage girdled by green trees,
A Rose-tree grew mid Summer-scents and songs,
And breathed her fragrant sighs upon the breeze;
From dawn's first blush, she cried, till sunset's close,
"Sweet Nightingale forlorn,
My heart bleeds with the thorn,
Oh, give me back my Rose!

"My Rose she twinkled like a gem of light
Amid the green leaves pillowed on my breast,
Loved by the Sun each day, the Moon each night,
In all the bloom of virgin beauty drest;
Alas, the good and fair have many foes!
My Rose, with all her charms,
Was stolen from mine arms.
Oh, give me back my Rose!

"Remember me, my Darling, and be true,
Think of my kisses, ever soft and sweet,
Bring back thy radiant jewels to my view,
Nor let thy crown be trampled in the street;
Since thou hast gone I have not known repose;
I yearn to see thy face
Of innocence and grace.
Oh, give me back my Rose!

"I will not blame thee—nay, I will not chide;
But, oh, return unto this widowed heart;
Return, return, and let thy tears be dried;
How canst thou linger from my love apart?
I fade, I sink with these complaining woes,
My kindness unreturned,
Love and devotion spurned.
Oh, give me back my Rose!

"Come back, come back, my cheeks are wet with tears,
My orphan-flower, my fondly cherished child,
My heart is aching with a Mother's fears,
Since from my bower some serpent thee beguiled;
Good Angels guard her from all cruel foes,
Till to the Tree she clings,
From which true pleasure springs,
And Christ shall wear my Rose!"

THE CORONAL OF LABOUR.

THE "Inaugural Ode" of the East London Industrial Exhibition. It was recited by Mr. Pringle, and highly eulogised by Earl Shaftesbury, who was president on the occasion.

WITH blooming wreaths we decorate the shrine
Of the bright seraph Labour, man's true friend,
And leaves of laurel with the olive twine,
While azure skies in welcome o'er us bend.

Labour exulting from the ground upsprings
As with the kingly eagle's plumes of fire;
Faith, Hope, and Love shed incense from their wings,
As up to Merit's summit they aspire.

Each bead-drop gemming Labour's gleaming brow
Outshines the lustre of the diamond-star;
And victories win the hammer, pen, and plough,
Surpassing all the conquests gained by War.

Greater are they who wear the bays of Fame
By peaceful efforts for their Country's good,
Than those who ride 'mid battle-smoke and flame,
And o'er the green Earth roll the crimson flood.

Minerva mounts her chariot, takes the field
Whence Mars in shame is driven to endless night;
And on the flag above her head and shield
Shine "Peace and Toil" in characters of light.

Labour is Fortune's nurse, the helmsman strong
That steers the Life-ship 'mid the breakers hurled;
'T is Freedom's Charter, Nature's holy song,
The sturdy Atlas that upholds the world.

The works of patient Toil are here enshrined,
All nations into closer union brought;
We mark the steady hand, the soaring mind,
Devotion, genius, perseverance, thought.

With manly sinews, toiling side by side,
In rival glory, to make angels glad,
Have gentle fingers busy needles plied,
The love of duty all the praise they had.

No jealousies of Faith or Clime intrude;
"All men are brethren" on the banner shows;
With cheerful friendship every heart's imbued,
And hands are clasped like leaves around the rose.

The Brain said to the Hand, "Fulfil
My grand conceptions with thy skill;
Let the Lord's talents brightly shine,
And glorify His name divine."

Then one the chisel's marvels wrought
In marble, like embodied thought;
Another on the canvas threw
Of colour every dazzling hue;

Some sailed on sparkling seas of sound,
Some roamed o'er Fancy's fairy ground,
Some built the strong-knit barque to float,
And others on the anvil smote;

Some sped the shuttle through the loom,
And some the engines made to boom;
And some with flowers bejewelled o'er
The emerald carpets of the shore.

Some tilled the earth, some temples reared,
And all with Song their labour cheered;
While e'en the least performed his part
For Science, Commerce, Trade, and Art.

The glory gained in the Battle stained
With the blood of a fallen brother,
Cannot heal the smart of the broken heart
Of the orphan-child and mother.

While low in the dust for ever rust
The cannon, sword, and sabre;
Fresh garlands bring and crown him King,
The peaceful Champion, Labour.

Reward and success to the men who bless
The world on their pathway thorny;
Who scatter the seeds of useful deeds
With hands embrowned and horny.

Chivalrous and strong 'gainst vice and wrong,
Proud knights of the noble order;
Their shields are bright with Honour's light,
And flowers their garments border.

The rank and file of our glorious Isle,
God send them peace and plenty!
May each coin they get by honest sweat
Be multiplied by twenty.

Industry weaves of amaranth leaves
The chaplet their brows adorning;
And they shall restore the grandeur of yore,
And the joy of Earth's early morning.

A great Soul in a Peasant's form
God oftentimes reveals,
And hearts 'neath rags may beat as warm
As those a robe conceals.
And, oh, remember, ye who give
Employ to Labour's bands,
That those by daily toil who live
Have hearts as well as hands.

All honour to the Working-men,
Who England's power uphold;
May History with truthful pen
Inscribe their deeds in gold.
In spite of cares that well might damp
The ardour of their plan,
They in eternal marble stamp
The dignity of Man!

THE EXILE TO THE WIND IN WINTER.

THE festive monarch Christmas decked all the country round;
About his royal bosom his snowy robe he drew,
With many a frosted jewel his diadem was crowned,
His icy sceptre glistening with a pale moon-silvered hue.

The Wind, his solemn herald, blew a blast o'er hill and plain,
Which died in tender trembles, like a soft-souled Poet's strain.

An Exile from my Country, musing on my couch of rest,
Far away from home and kindred, gentle Sleep no guest of mine,
Came the Night-Wind to my chamber like a wild bird to its nest,
Flying, fluttering, flapping, with a cadence full and fine.
And through the casement, stealing to my pillow straight it came,
And in tones of flutelike softness breathed an absent loved one's name.

Then said I, "Night's weird pilgrim, travelling over sea and land,
Oh! whither hast thou wandered, ghostly Minstrel, with thy rhymes?
I am listening to thy music: it is sacred, old, and grand,
And it bears from Gothic temples the happy Christmas-chimes.
Oh! are they tears, those raindrops, which thou weep'st o'er faded bowers?
Is that sad wail a requiem at the funeral of the flowers?"

Methought the Wind, replying, said, "I and my sister Snow
Flit over earth together, like two spirits of the cloud,
To greet the King of Christmas and the pale Old Year we go:
I chant Time's burial service, and my sister makes his shroud;—
And aye together mingled, just like the flower and thorn,
Are happiness and sorrow, and pain and pleasure born.

"From distant climes I've tidings: I left the Battle-plain,
With tear-drops on my pinions, for yon ivy-mantled cot,
Where a beauteous Maiden dreameth of her lover who is slain,
And I bear his dying blessing to that dear and hallowed spot.
I spread his banner proudly when he fought in Victory's track:
As he fell he cried, 'My Mary!' but he'll never more come back.

"Whilst sweeping o'er the Ocean I beheld a noble ship:—
I filled the sails with breezes, for manly hearts it bore;
Hard at the helm the Pilot stood, a prayer upon his lip,
And Angels watched it homewards, its canvas silvering o'er:
See! now he clasps his Darlings in his Cot beside the bay,
And a holiday of Heaven will be blessed *Christmas-Day*.

"I have passed a stately Mansion, and while the inmates slept
Fierce fire burst forth, and, crackling, the flames around it spread;
With gusty breath I fanned them, and higher still they crept,
Till in that stifling furnace the sleepers all lay dead:
In the havoc of the Shipwreck I've heard the gasps and groans,
But amid the blazing Landwreck I've left but blackened bones.

"I make the Beggar shiver in his rags, upon the road,
And in his face the snowflakes I whirl in maddening fun;
I ghastly make the faces in gaunt Poverty's abode,
And like a midnight robber round the palace-gables run;
Like a spectre I extinguish the faint taper in the room,
And crush the steed and rider with the wilderness Simoom.

"As I crossed the crowded City, I spied a homeless Girl,—
So beautiful! oh, so beautiful! despite her woeworn face.
A tear dropped from her eyelash, which at first I thought a pearl:
I have borne it to a garden to become a flower of grace.
No cold repulse I gave her, no galling sneer I cast,
But a blessing from her Mother I whispered as I passed.

"A messenger from heaven is the Wind, where'er it blows—
A mystic wandering Angel, bringing tales of joy and woe;
It bears the balmy sweetness of Summer's blushing rose,
Or chases, like a goblin, brown leaves along the snow;
But on happy English homesteads it lays its sweetest spells
When laden with the music of the merry Christmas-bells."

"Hast thou for me no message—answer to my fondest prayer?
No olive-branch of comfort to quell my Soul's alarms?"
"Yes, I have seen thy dear Bride: she is happy, she is fair;
On her breast thy Babe is nestling, bright with its budding charms;
She is dreaming—fondly dreaming;—of thy faith, and hope, and love,
While angel-guards surround her and thy little beauteous dove."

———

PHASES OF BEAUTY AND PASSION.

EYES which are expression's throne,
All the inner Soul revealing,
What magnetic power ye own,
Fountains fresh of thought and feeling!
Luminous lustres that commingle
Passions till the pulses tingle;
All that curses, soothes, and blesses;
Kindness, kisses, and caresses;
Fancy's fire, affection's beam,
Half-inspiring and half-killing,
Life and rapture reign supreme;
With their darts the bosom thrilling!
Fascinating depths surprising,
Orient wealth of bliss disguising;
Twinkling worlds of smiles and tears,
Golden realms of hopes and fears,
Love's Elysian paradise,
Beauty's empire, Woman's eyes!

Eyes with radiance soft and mild,
Blue abysses, day-star lighted,
By your dancing fires beguiled,
Hearts are lost and left benighted.
Hair of amber-sheen far-flowing,
Like a Summer-sunset glowing
Lucid spheres of heavenly azure,
Sapphire brilliants, richest treasure;
Venus' self no lovelier knew
When she charmed divine Apollo;
Stars that glisten shrined in dew,
Who their fiery course dare follow?
Eyelids with bewitching spell,
Lashes languishingly long,
Parian gates to heaven or hell,
All unconscious of the wrong;
Love is all she asks of thee,
And her love as Heaven is free.

Eyes that gaze as in a dream;
Oh, thou fair angelic girl,
Whose thoughts are like the crystal stream,
That softly flows o'er beds of pearl!
Madonna chaste, thy rosary telling,
While a ruby cross reposes
On thy breast so gently swelling,
Like the leaves of snowy roses.
Silver lamps burn on the altar,
Flowers in vases round thee stand,
Thine is Faith that cannot falter,
Purity, devotion bland!
Prismatic hues from oriels painted
O'er thy placid brow are shed,
Like haloes shining round the sainted
When the blessed soul has fled;
Such perfection cannot err—
Religion's pensive worshipper.

Eyes of hazel, cheeks of bloom,
Glossy chestnut locks that reel—
Marble Angel! by the tomb
Strewing amaranths, see her kneel!
For her dear-loved Monarch grieving,
Earthly balm from none receiving,
Weeping on the spot, flower-blooming,
All her cherished hopes entombing;
The reverence of love's distress,
Hallowed quietude of sorrow,
The virtuous blush of bashfulness,
Hope that yearns for God's to-morrow!
These are thine, O Woman rarest,
Cleopatra, sweetest, fairest,
Pity's tearful dew distilling,
Barren hearts with beauty filling:
Heaven shall give thee long renown—
Thine shall be the lily-crown!

Eyes with emerald-gleaming rays,
In a moment warmer, colder;
Flaxen curls, a yellow blaze,
Ravishing the rapt beholder.
In her wreath the red rose-blossom,
Perfumed with her fragrant sighing,
While her white voluptuous bosom
Palpitates, all shame defying.
Syren of the isle, she singeth
O'er bleached bones her luscious lay;
As the parasite she clingeth,
Kissing all thy life away!
Foolish swain! she ne'er reveals,
What she thinks and what she feels;
When she 's won thee she will scorn thee,
Yet I know 'tis vain to warn thee;
Though the goddess smile to kill,
Thou wilt quaff her love-draught still.

Eyes methinks most beautiful,
Jetty-fringed and black as night,
Joy they kindle, care they lull,
And passion calm with angel-light.
Oh, dear Edens sweetly shaded!
Oh, dark ringlets, neatly braided!
Glorious orbs of feeling tender,
Glowing with a diamond-splendour!
Speed laggard Time, thou Moon, hie on,
And bring my bosom's blissful Bride,
That I may be Endymion,
And she, Diana, by my side!
Elysium of connubial wishes,
Lapt I live in dreams delicious;
Spring of Hope! oh, dawn on me!
Flower and blossom bring with thee,
For there is space for every Bird
That sings its gladness to be heard.

NUMBERED WITH HIS JEWELS.

'TWAS in the brown October
That thoughtful Lily died,
And Angels came to robe her,
And row her o'er the tide.
Her sweet fresh-springing fancies
Perfumed her pensive gloom,
Like asphodels and pansies
Which half have lost their bloom.

The trees in all their splendour
Of russet, green, and gold,
All loving thoughts and tender
Unto her spirit told;

Her face wore then a brightness
  And beauty rarely seen,
'T was like a snowdrop's whiteness
  In moonlight's silver sheen.

Her last words to her Mother
  Were, "Mother, do not weep,
Each blossom bears another,
  Life's festival to keep;
The Summer-flowers declining
  Breathe prophecies of Spring;
No leaflet drops repining
  That cannot longer cling.

"Life! Life! there is no dying,
  Death is to be reborn;
What rose in fragance sighing
  E'er felt or feared the thorn?
And in each human spirit
  Some bud of bliss will fade,
But only to inherit
  New life without a shade."

Thus spake my thoughtful Lily,
  When cold October's tints
On leaves and branches chilly
  Had left their brilliant prints;
A life of more completeness
  She won in youth and grace;
A smile of perfect sweetness
  Still lingered on her face.

With jasmine-stars in blossom
  We wreathed her beauteous head,
And on her shrouded bosom
  A spray of lilies spread;
Her dainty curls o'erflowing,
  Her wee white waxen ears,
Her cheeks like rosebuds glowing,
  When Morn's fresh beam appears.

PROCESSION OF THE CHILDREN AT THE ROMAN CARNIVAL.

THE Carnival in Rome was held,
  When Rome stood like an oak,
Defiant to the lightning's flash,
  And to the thunder's stroke.
Her growth was slow but glorious,
  And higher rose her form
In beauty, strength, and majesty,
  The harder blew the storm.

The soul of valour fired her men,
  And crowned her victor-arms,
And famous were her women fair
  For virtue as for charms.
With unassuming dignity
  They lived—a gallant race,
And bore defeat and victory
  With almost equal grace.

Rome's eagle-banners in the van
  Of empires flapped their wings,
And haughty nations she subdued,
  And conquered mighty Kings.

'T was in the training of her Youth
  That all her grandeur lay;
A scene from old imperial Rome
  May fit my rhyme to-day.

With garlands crown that Matron's brow,
  Ye mothers of the earth,
And emulate her simple state,
  And prize her moral worth;
Who, when bedizened Princes asked,
  "Where are your jewels grand?"
Clasped to her breast her children blest
  And said, "Lo, here they stand!"

Before great Cæsar's royal robe
  Became Rome's winding-sheet,
A peerless proud Procession marched
  Along each crowded street;
And from the tops of her Seven Hills,
  'Neath skies as clear as glass,
A famous Roman General watched
  The splendid pageant pass.

Then shouts burst from the balconies,
  "They come, they come, they come!"
Like gorgeous birds the banners soared,
  And sounded loud the drum;
The bravest Heroes earth could boast
  In glory-days of old,
Swept past the veteran Warrior
  In scarlet and in gold.

First came the grey-haired Chiefs, and cried,
  "Ye gods, we *have* been brave!"
"Alas, alas!" the General sighed,
  "Old men, ye near the grave.
Then who will fight for Roman right,
  And bid her eagles rise,
And laurels spread around her head,
  Proud Queen of azure skies?"

Next came the Manhood of the land,
  Young soldiers, trained and true,
And many a fair and gentle hand
  Flowers in their pathway threw;
While chariots rolled and trumpets rang,
  "Oh, we *are* brave!" they said;
And Rome's triumphal arches shook
  Above each crested head.

The General murmured back their words,
  "Ay, brave, and strong, and tall,
And round the empire-city gleams
  Your armour like a wall;
But when with age ye're hoary grown,
  Ye bearded, stalwart men,
Who'll make Rome's regal glory known,
  And fight her battles then?"

At length, while leaning on his sword,
  The fire flashed from his eye,
"The Children come, God bless them!" rose
  Like music to the sky,
And glittering like the wavelets tossed
  On Summer's laughing sea,
Thousands of noble Children marched,
  With haughty step and free.

And as they passed the watch-tower whence
The Roman General gazed,
"We *will* be brave!" the young troops cried,
Each face to heaven upraised;
"We *will* be brave!" was echoed loud
Those old seven hills around;
And Tiber's yellow flood was glad
To hear the sparkling sound.

Then from the General's visage stern
The sombre shadow fled;
His plumy helmet high he waved
To cheer those hosts, and said,
"Contentedly I now can die,
And with a soldier's mien,
For Champions brave dear Rome to save
This day mine eyes have seen."

A silent Angel, grim and white,
Deals carnage on each hand,
He heaps the plain with dead like grain,
And sweeps from land to land;
He reaps a harvest thick of men,
And gleans the grey and old;
The young are seeds that spring again
And blossom 'bove the mould.

Architects of the Future-time
Are the youth of every land;
They build a realm with deeds sublime,
And make its history grand.
Of all the garden of our race,
They are the choicest Flower;
Strengthen their limbs with Freedom's grace,
Endow their minds with power.

THE PILGRIM PLAYERS: A STORY WITHOUT ROMANCE.

IN TWO PARTS.

THERE is nothing apocryphal in this story. The author happened to be at Hawick, on the borders of Scotland, in 1854, when the incidents of the death and burial of the Player's Wife occurred. The Player had frequently visited this little town before; he was highly respected, and universally sympathized with under his bereavement. The author learned from an authentic source, during a subsequent lecturing campaign, of the poor girl's death. The public little know the sterling honesty, intellect, refinement of feeling, and unmerited deprivations of many of those "pilgrims" and "strangers" who divert them with their harmless and unpretending preformances.

PART I.

QUEEN SUMMER her royal raiment wore,
And counted her daisied rosary o'er,
Glistening with dewy gloss;
The kine in the meadows stood breast-deep,
The lambs in the sunshine lay asleep,
Like children in beds of moss.

To our Village some Pilgrim-Players came,
With an old grey horse with one leg lame,
And a rickety four-wheeled car;
It seemed like a staggering harvest-wain,
Crunching along at each tug and strain,
Up the hill by the white toll-bar.

A-top of the car, which creaked and bent,
Were the canvas, poles, and ropes of a Tent,
With boards for the seats and stage;
Gay "drop-scenes" rolled in a ragged plight,
And "side-wings" fledging themselves for flight,
All rotting away with age.

On the box which held the Player's men,
It seemed Pandora's revived again,
Sate his Wife and Daughter fair;
Their two sweet faces were peering down,
Like doves o'er the streets of a quiet town,
Ere they venture to flutter there.

Oh day too fine! Oh breeze too bland!
Oh rosy Summer-Edens grand!
Your welcome was all too warm;
For the Strolling-Players had better fared,
If the wintry sun had wildly glared
'Mid tempest, and cloud, and storm.

The Tent was built in a public place,
And many a youth of rustic grace
Went into the wandering Show,
And the Marionettes came from their shades,
With pasteboard swords for battle-blades,
And pop-gun pellets I trow.

But amid the many pleasing things
Which lifted their souls on Wonder's wings,
And filled their young hearts with grief,
Was the "Babes i' th' Wood," who died through wrong,
And the Robin that came with mournful song,
And covered them leaf by leaf.

Behind the stage, with its dark-green baize,
The Player his strong, deep voice did raise,
And his heart with ambition stirred;
His Daughter's softened and silvery tone,
And his young Wife's sweet and plaintive moan,
In their several parts were heard.

Then gaily the fair Child danced and sang,
Till the ragged roof of the old Tent rang
With applause of that fairy thing;
One would have thought she had a bird's heart,
That never had known either pang or smart,
'Neath her faded tinselling.

'Twas a transient paradise of praise,
That her palpitating heart did raise,
For Fortune 's a fickle queen;
They had but one evening's poor success,
For the Player's harvest was always less
When Summer was glad and green.

The Pilgrim-Player was young in years,
But he was no stranger to toil and tears,
And his soul still flashed with flame;
Though furrows appeared on his steadfast brow,
Deep-grooved by Suffering's iron plough,
In struggles for bread and fame.

Unlike his play was the Player's life,
He fought with realities in the strife,
Not with pasteboard sword and shield.
No tinsel-drops were the tears he shed
When his Wife and Daughter starved for bread,
And labour no bread would yield.

In Nature's temple his soul adored,
And oft on poetic pinions soared
In joy like a bird in the bowers;
His heart with all-glorious things was blent,
With Shakspeare's wondrous shapes he spent
Luxurious and loving hours.

But vainly he sought for an anodyne
To light up his eye with sunbeam-shine,
And gild with rose-hues his cheek;
The glory of Nature could never fill
An empty cupboard, nor melody still
The pangs which of hunger speak.

With iron sceptre and scowling brow
Poverty flung o'er his household now
Its shadow accursed and black;
A wreck on the waves, he drifted fast,
And only to Heaven his prayers were cast,
While followed Death on his track.

He mused how lightly the world doth hold
Most precious lives against tangible Gold,
The Idol it most adores;
How favoured flunkeys and gilded knaves
With golden spurs ride harnessed slaves,
Crawling along on all-fours.

Poor little souls with sinister views
He saw turn away from those who amuse,
And tickle their hearts of dust;
Not half of the crowd, he thought, with a frown,
Who laugh with delight at the jests of the Clown,
If hungry would give him a crust.

The Player he lived in one humble room,
Its window was bright with plants in bloom,
Which the place with fragrance filled;
And there each morn his sweet child-saint
Sate reading a book 'mid their odours faint,
While the Skylark's music trilled.

Like golden-hearted lake-lilies fair,
Were the flowers of his heart which blossomed there,
His delicate Wife and Child;
For the virtues of life as lovely grow,
Secluded in sunless vales below,
As on hills where light hath smiled.

Ah! when Misfortune turns gold to dross,
And the hopes of life have lost their gloss,
A haven is Woman's breast;
Like sunshine athwart the morning-mist,
The vapours she changes to amethyst,
And clouds are in jewels dressed.

Then, heavily fell on his heart a blow,
In sickness his *beautiful Wife* lay low,
And troubles came thick and fast;
But, while he bowed to the reckless storm,
Her spirit was strong, though weak her form,
And meekly bent to the blast.

The hours winged by in their swallow-flight,
Wafting laughter from palaces bright,
And sorrow from dungeon-walls;
Laden with joy to a fortunate few,
With woe to a million hearts as true,
Where sunshine but seldom falls.

Softly drew onward the time of dreams,
Pellucidly slid the dark brown streams,
Each blade and stone tinged with gold;
The last sun-ray on the world was shed,
The stars peeped forth from their midnight bed,
And the lambs were in their fold.

Then nestling close to her Mother's face,
The little Girl said, with artless grace,
"Oh, Mother, your lips are chill!"
Said she, "'Tis a very cold night, my Child."
"But your cheek is pale; your eyes are wild!"
"'Tis the taper's rays. Be still!"

Then the Maiden sank into peaceful rest;
The Wife laid her head on her husband's breast,
And softly to him she said,
"Beloved, Death's friendly hand I feel,
Like a wave to the shore my life doth steal;
I soon shall be with the dead.

"Uphill together we've borne our load,
And our life has been a weary road,
With briers and thorns bestrewn;
But, oh! there is light in the cloud for thee,
And somewhere in Winter's lap may be
A fair and a flowery June.

"My hopes lie crumbled within my heart,
Since I from thee and my Child must part,
Oh! guard our dear Daughter well.
Wake, breeze of Heaven! beam, ray divine!
The river is crossed! Great God, I'm Thine!"
And her eyelids gently fell.

Like a holy spirit that stills the strife,
Death moved o'er the troubled tide of life;
Rehearsal and play were o'er;
A broken lute whence the music's gone,
A golden cage whence the bird hath flown,
Lay she who would grieve no more.

The motherless Girl, like a white rosebud,
By a faded lily in anguish stood,
Very tearful, and pale, and sad;
'Twas a pitiful sight, that childish grief,
As sudden blight on the early leaf,
In its glossy greenness clad.

Her Father's words o'er her heart had power
Like sunshine on the storm-beaten flower,
But ah! her loved sun had set;
He strained her head to his aching breast,
With kisses he hushed her sobs to rest;
But her soul was sorrowful yet.

He said, "On a stronger arm we'll lean,
Lorn dove, and seek for a brighter scene,
Have done with the Showman's care;"
And a sunbeam crept through the silent room,
And sadly it glittered amid the gloom,
Sacred to death and despair.

Kind neighbours supplied their every need—
One to take care of the Girl agreed,
And soften a lot so hard;
Another to stitch the "poor body's" shroud,
And others to carry it through the crowd,
To the mossy, old Churchyard.

They looked their last on the faded face
Of the Player's Wife in its narrow place,
Then shrouded it up from view;
No slow-stepping steeds the coffin bore
In a stately hearse, but shoulders four,
Attended by mourners two.

In a nook of the old Churchyard so lone,
Enwreathed with flowers a small head-stone
This simple memento bore,
"Pause, stranger, drop on this grave a tear,
The Wife of a Stroller lies buried here;
The lights are out—the play is o'er!"

PART II.

The Pilgrim-Player now bade perforce
A long adieu to his old grey horse
And box of little dumb men.
A hazy veil passed over his eyes,
And his strong breast heaved with stifled sighs,
And sorrow broke forth again.

He patted his horse, he stroked his mane,
He loosened the bit, released the rein,
And gave him another feed.
"Adieu," he said, "thou pride of my heart!
My poor lean friend, we at last must part.
Farewell, my own faithful Steed!"

His Daughter then a fresh bunch of grass
Raised to his mouth in a dewy mass,
And his white face seemed to smile.
She curled his mane, in a freak, with flowers,
And wept as she thought of the vanished hours
When guiding him mile on mile.

The glory had fled from the Earth and Sky
With that angel-face, that beaming eye,
Kind Mother and loving Wife.
The faded clothing, the book half-read,
Recalled to the Player's mind the dead,
And his heart grew sick of life.

'Twas near the close of a wintry day,
The clouds to the westward broke away,
The sun to his couch withdrew;
Grand Edinbro' town was robed in white,
The Frost-King sparkled in gems of light,
And keenly the north wind blew.

While glimmered the Moon, with beams half-shorn,
Benumbed with the cold, and all forlorn,
Two figures fronted the storm.
One was haggard, though strong of limb,
The other was delicate, young, and slim,
With little to keep her warm.

With hair dishevelled and garments wild,
The stalwart Sire and his gifted Child
Their harps at the lattice played!
And well might the stones have wept to hear
The plaintive music that fell on the ear,
From him and the little Maid.

The chill air glistened at every gust,
Like a floating cloud of diamond-dust,
As they left a roystering throng.
The gay young Singer grew fainter now,
Her limbs were wearied and pale her brow,
And she tired of dance and song.

It was Christmas-Eve, and that poor Girl lay,
With her gentle spirit passing away,
While the bells rang in the air.
No more would she sing in her joy and pride,
No more would her feet to music glide,
So heavy their fetters were.

For Fever now on her life-stream fed,
And languidly drooped her beauteous head,
But her hopes were all fixed above.
And the Beacon-Star shone soft and clear,
And the Bells, merry Bells, were ringing near,
To welcome the Lord of Love.

What were his thoughts, whose desolate life
Had never been free from care and strife,
No language has power to paint.
"Alas!" he sighed, "what a fate is mine,
My helm is unshipped on a Sea of brine,
Bereft of my Guardian-Saint."

His thoughts the Maiden read through and through.
"Oh Father," she said, "to your faith be true:
Trust in God as you struggle on.
My Mother beckons me through yon cloud,
Oh! do not wet with your tears my shroud,
But be thankful when I'm gone.

"The star-eyed daisies come back each Spring,
King-cups for playmates they with them bring,
And God will send back to you
Bountiful gifts for the flowers He's ta'en;
One dying blossom drops seeds like rain,
Your blessings shall be as dew.

"Good night, dear Father, I long to sleep.
God calls to His fold His wandering sheep,
The World is a thorny bed."

Her beautiful eyes, so still and cold,
And her pulseless heart, too plainly told,
That her bright young Soul had fled.

She lay in her wee shrine, fair as snow,
A white rose-chaplet adorned her brow,
And lilies perfumed her breast.
Sweetly she smiled in her dreamless sleep,
As if the Angels a guard did keep,
Lest aught should disturb her rest.

A white pall over the coffin fell,
And the Church-bells tolled a solemn knell,
And many a heart was riven.
The narrow box by her Mother's lay
'Neath the black yew tree on New Year's Day,
But their Spirits sang in Heaven.

ROMANCE OF THE HAWTHORN.

COMPOSED on seeing an old red May, or Hawthorn, in a garden, which had bloomed with white blossoms mingled everywhere in the tree with the red.

EACH tree hath charms in glen and grove,
When Summer's sun-tints fall;
But the Hawthorn fair, that scents the air,
Is the loveliest of them all.
How the Linnets chirp its sprays among,
So fai-ly coraline;
And a song I'll sing to the beauteous thing,
This favourite tree of mine.

The Poet's Star is that which gems
The gloaming's dewy hour:
The Poet's Bird in the cloud is heard,
The Daisy is his flower;
But the Hawthorn is the Poet's tree,
And how its beauty grew,
In a woodlet wild, I sang to my child,
The fancy I sing to you.

A Poet dwelt in a lowly cot,
No jewelled star he wore;
Yet the earth and skies had heavenlier dyes,
Because of his songs of yore.
The Muses not yet had stormed his breast,
And made him with passion pale,
Till the torch divine from Love's own shrine
Flashed into his nature frail.

His Harp was the only wealth he owned;
But gold was in every string:
Not royal birth could he boast, but worth,
And he was in heart a King.
His realm was vast, and rich, and grand,
Beyond all a Monarch's dreams;
For his throne was set where oceans met,
And his crown was of sunset-beams.

A Maiden he loved of high degree,
With never a thought of gold;
For above him far, as some splendid Star,
She shone from her Castle old.
But Love is a leveller everywhere,
And *its current coin is truth*:
Both the Eagle and Dove its might may prove,
And the wild young heart of youth.

By the grey and ivy-hung Castle walls
The Poet and Maiden strayed,
When the Harvest-Moon sailed down the lagoon
Of the sky in light arrayed.
And ever in token of their tryst
To her Lover she sent a ring;
But a snare was laid that him betrayed,
Like a singing-bird trapped in Spring.

While his Harp he played at her window-bower,
The Maiden said, pale with fear,
"No ring, Love, to thee, has been sent by me:
Tell me then why thou art here?"
Then forth from the shadow sprang a Knight,
Those Lovers for aye to part;
And his sword he drew, and thrust it through
His Harp to the Minstrel's heart.

The Maiden beheld the fatal blow,
"Ah! cruel Knight," she cried:
"Thy jealous spleen too rash hath been,"
And sank by the Poet's side.
The ruby drops and the pearly tears
Commingling kissed the dell;
And the Hawthorn grew, a type so true,
On the spot where the Lovers fell.

GOD'S WORLD MIGHT BE A PARADISE.

GOD'S World might be a Paradise,
If Man in Man beheld a brother;
Were Creeds and Castes blown to the winds,
And kindly deeds done to each other;
A scene of beauty, bloom, and song,
If each would use his noble powers
To plough the stubborn glebe of Wrong,
And plant again Love's Eden-flowers.

God's World might be a Paradise,
Without one tear of sin and sadness;
For Heaven or Hell dwells in the heart,
As man exists in grief or gladness.
Man would be better, better loved;
The heart is ever won by kindness;
One word of Mercy might have saved
Souls that are lost in moral blindness.

God's World might be a Paradise,
If all might Labour's fruits inherit;
If Woman reigned on Virtue's throne,
And Man showed reverence to her merit.
That nobler name than king or lord—
The name of Man—Oh! guard and cherish;
And Freedom's sacred lands shall live,
When guilty thrones and crowns shall perish.

God's World might be a Paradise,
If joy, like music, thrilled heart-chords;
If loving lips arched Cupid's bow,
With arrows tipped with golden words.

The Heaven we pray for would be here,
  If each would bravely do his part
To crown with joy one cheerless home,
  To crown with love one aching heart.

TWILIGHT BY THE OCEAN.

CALM, pensive hour of tender gloom,
  Sweet Twilight, brooding o'er the Sea!
The Sunset paints her gorgeous plume,
  High o'er the headlands proud and free.

Star-sprinkled isthmus, cool and bright!
  Rich robe in sweeping folds unrolled;
Half-sister to the dusky Night,
  Whose brow is decked with pearls and gold.

I love this holy calm of Heaven,
  When, on the grey rocks where I stand,
The billows of the Sea are driven,
  Like sacred Music, old and grand.

God strewed the Ocean with seed-pearls;
  To Earth the blooming flowers He gave;
Night's shield He bossed with gleaming worlds,
  And called the Spring from Winter's grave.

The Winds that sweep, the Waves that roll,
  The Hurricane's wild minstrelsy,
In one grand Concert to my Soul
  Chant songs of Love and Liberty.

The petals of the folded flowers,
  The armature of insects bright,
The plumage of the birds—dew-showers,
  The amethystine arch of Night,

The Rainbow from the cloud that springs,
  The leaf, the sand-grain on the shore,—
Of the All-wise are utterings
  Whose goodness Earth and Heaven adore.

THE CUCKOO'S SONG.

WHEN Spring leads forth the rosy day,
  And bees among the blossoms hum,
The Cuckoo chants his roundelay,
  And softest-nested Birds are dumb.
A Bird of noble blood, I wot,
  That idly basketh in sun and dew;
He singeth never; he buildeth not;
  But crieth aloud, "Cuckoo—cuckoo!"

He dreameth in woods and pastures green,
  And spareth the nested treasures never;
His food is sopped in dew, I ween,
  The royal Bird by the noble river.
Oh! the purple Finch and speckled Thrush
  May quaff from chaliced flowers the dew;
But a sacred thing, in tree or bush,
  Is the Bird that crieth, "Cuckoo—cuckoo!"

Ho! Ho! grey bird of mellow tone,
  I saw thee flying yestereve:
A nest was empty; the parent flown;
  Under the shade I heard her grieve;
Heavily moaned she in the tree;
  Silently fell the sun and dew;
But the royal Bird still chants in glee,
  From the olden Elm, "Cuckoo—cuckoo!"

I'd rather be the lowly Lark,
  Whose bed is on the grassy ground,
The Nightingale, which sings at dark,
  And makes the listening Woods resound;
To soar, to sing, to welcome strife,
  Beloved by all the good and true,
With useful labour gilding life,
  Than sing like thee, "Cuckoo—cuckoo!"

SONG OF THE PEN.

HURRAH'S and bravo's for the Pen!
And let the chorus ring again.
The gods ne'er gave to thinking men
  A prize of higher worth.
Its monuments adorn the land,
Immortal are its trophies grand;
Come smiles and tears at its command—
  Its sceptre rules the earth.

And oh! how dazzling is the dower
Of Genius in that triumph-hour,
When Inspiration's magic power
  Inflames his heart and brain!
On Fancy's wings he soars sublime,
And conquers Death, Despair, and Time;
Etherealized by dulcet rhyme,
  He half forgets his pain.

With eyes deep-sunk and visage long,
He coins his health and strength in song,
And what for him will care the throng
  Whose praises he adores?
Ambrosial seems his feast on air,
He glories in a garret bare,
He dines on sorrow, sups on care,
  And dreams on barren floors.

And yet thou art a glorious thing,
World-moving Pen, and Wonder's spring.
Czar, Kaiser, Emperor, nor King
  Like thee an army owns.
First in the vanguard of the fight,
Where streams the banner of the right,
Thy hosts advance—a phalanx bright
  That shames the blaze of thrones

The soldier girds his battle-blade,
In gorgeous panoply arrayed,
But thine shall be a humbler trade—
  To bless the homes of men.
Thine is the grandeur of the mind,
In heavenly melodies enshrined,
Sun-robed, radiant, unconfined,
  The all-victorious Pen!

Proud Science boasts its wizard-skill;
The telegraphic harpstrings thrill,
And courier-engines whistle shrill
Through startled grove and glen.
The Press, the fulcrum of the free,
Hath raised from dust the toil-bent knee;
But these would only useless be
Without the mighty Pen.

Jove's daughters own thy regal sway,
And Painting, Sculpture, Music lay
Before thy throne their garlands gay—
Thy fame is blown afar.
By thee those precious boons of heaven
To crown our Mother-Isle are given—
Stern Justice, with her balance even,
And Freedom's holy star.

Hail, Poet's Pen! Thou may'st aspire
To kindle souls with living fire,
And flash like the electric wire
Thy burning sparks along.
Apollo's chaplet brighter glows
Than beaming sun or blooming rose,
And, oh! I would be one of those
In fellowship with Song.

THE SOUL'S PORTRAIT PAINTERS.

Lo! two kinds of Portrait-Painters
Ply their pencils from Art's throne,
And they both may win a glory,
And a separate province own.
One, with perfect charms of beauty,
Represents the living face;
And the other Portrait-Painter
Robes the mind with moral grace.

Of the fairest form the portrait
Soon will fade and pass from sight,
And the breathing smiling image
Will dissolve in endless night;
But the Spirit's moral picture,
When its colours once are traced,
Brighter grows through countless ages,
And can never be effaced.

And we all are Portrait-Painters
On the canvas of the Mind,—
Painters of ourselves and others,
For the glory of Mankind.
Meekness, Patience, Perseverance,
Love, Joy, Sorrow, Faith, and Prayer,
Are the mighty magic pencils
That inscribe the colours there.

We may paint with hues of splendour
Features lovely and divine,
Beaming with celestial radiance,
In the light of God to shine;
Or with pencil dipt in darkness
Blot for aye the glorious scroll,
While the Angels *weep with pity*
O'er the ruins of the Soul.

Moral Artist! every Portrait
Shall be hung upon the walls
Of God's gallery for judgment
When the mortal curtain falls.
Paint for Heaven! the task is noble,
Angel-guards shall gird thee well;
Numbered with its gems and jewels
All the pure in heart shall dwell.

THE UNIVERSAL TELEGRAPH.

THE wild Swan hath its last hymn sung,
'Mid tropic reeds in Music dying;
And dewy winds, with silver lung,
I hear around it sighing, sighing.
It is not lost, that plaintive psalm;
It soars above those groves of balm.

The blossom-cradled Bee low lieth,
Dove and Butterfly have flown,
The Rose in leafless beauty dieth,
The Violet shuts its eye unknown,
The universal Soul exhales;
But Heaven's grand purpose never fails.

A pale unnoted Star hath set!
I saw its kingly shape go by,
Begirt with cloudy coronet,
A strange, wild frenzy in its eye;
"I go, mad world," it seemed to say,
"To make for thee a Judgment-Day!

Along the corridors of Stars
The deeds of men and empires run,
Through arteries like golden bars,
And nerves that stretch from Sun to Sun;
And, though our human lot be hard,
The meads are flowered, the clouds are starred.

The Infant's lisp, the Poet's song,
The smile of love, the glance of scorn,
The Truth, whose neck is crushed by Wrong,
And Freedom, of her strong locks shorn,
Æolian Harps of God are stringing:
Hark! the Unseen Wires are ringing.

Oh earnest Heart! Oh soaring Soul!
The Titan-moulded Truth shall grow;
From Freedom's grave the stone shall roll,
And Despots quail her power to know;
Each thorn twined in the Crown she wears
Shall blossom through Eternal Years.

THE ACTOR, THE PRIEST, AND THE CAPTAIN.

INCIDENTS OF THE FOUNDERING OF THE "LONDON."

"HEAVE-HO, there! Weigh the anchor!" cried
the Captain, with a roar,
And the noble steam-ship "London" left
behind Old England's shore;

With twice-a-hundred passengers she proudly sailed away,
And friends shook hands at parting, and every heart was gay.

Ere many leagues she voyaged sprang up a furious gale,
Which made the stoutest Sailor with sudden fear turn pale:
Seas dashed through the engine-room, extinguishing the fires,
Dreadful shrieks rose on the winds from mothers, babes, and sires.

And oh! to hear their cries for help! and yet no help was near;
The knell of every earthly hope smote on each listening ear.
Some wept in silent anguish, and some appalled did stand,
And others bent their knees in prayer whilst fell Death's icy hand.

And see! 'mid crowds despairing a Priest of the Most High,
He points them to the Star of Hope, immortal in the sky;
Right nobly did he labour to preach the Gospel-plan,
And to prove his mission holy by doing good to man.

Brave in that hour of peril through weary day and night,
The veteran British Actor toiled on with all his might;
The ship it was his Theatre, the deck it was his stage,
A gallant part he acted that shall thrill from age to age.

A grander character he wrought than e'er he played before,
The Angels were spectators of the manly part he bore;
Calm in that ocean-tragedy—sublime amid the strife,
His last act was the sternest and best of all his life.

God only knows his feelings and thoughts when hope was o'er,
And, face to face with Fate, he leaned upon that cabin door;
Oh! how intensely Real must have seemed that stricken host,
Compared with all the tinselled Show Dramatic art can boast!

The intrepid Captain flinched not from his duty to the last,
He was a child of tempests, and he feared nor wave nor blast;
He said in tones of sadness, "We manfully have striven;
No human help can save you, so put your trust in Heaven!"

There never sailed a Mariner than he more brave and true,
It was a heart of oak that beat beneath his jacket blue.
The last boat then was lowered—she left the vessel's side;
"God speed you safe to land!" the Hero-Captain cried.

"Beside the post of danger with these poor souls I'll stay;
Your course lies straight for Brest, two hundred miles away."
A fearful scene they witnessed when they cleared the sinking ship,
Horror strained each eyeball, and terror blanched each lip.

Some waved adieus with handkerchiefs whose hearts were dead within;
"A thousand guineas!" one exclaimed, "if you will take me in!"
And then the ship plunged down a gulf made in the dark sea-wall,
And a winding-sheet of billows enshrouded one and all.

While yet the little pinnace 'mid the maddened surges tossed,
They saw the "London" founder, with the Captain at his post.
The Messenger of Mercy with others knelt in prayer;
Spectral were their faces, for "death" was written there.

Like raging lions roared the waves above the struggling wreck,
One at the pumps kept working while corses strewed the deck,
And with his fine head resting on his clenched hands as before,
The famous British Actor leaned on the cabin door.

A lesson worth the learning this catastrophe has taught,
That all men for each other should labour as they ought;
That each one for himself must answer to the Judge of All,
And by his good or ill intent each man must stand or fall.

Trust not in dreams and dogmas, but in earnest thoughts and deeds,
Men of the old heroic stamp the valiant Life-Ship needs;
Who was Actor, Captain, Priest, Heaven will not make the test,
But who upon the Stage of Life has played his part the best!

———

THE LIFE-BOAT AND THE BATTERY.

GIRT by the Sea, I climbed the crags,
  Gazed from the mountain's crown,
And marked a contrast on the coast
  That ridged the breezy down.
Framed in the frontier of a rock,
  A Battery tried its gauge,
Grim as a hundred lions' mouths
  When roaring in their rage;
And Eastward out of range I spied
  A Life-Boat's buoyant form,
Which seemed to hover like a dove
  Amid the iron-storm.

Methought a Voice burst forth from out
  The Battery's fiery throat,
And with a braggart's challenge loud
  Addressed the gallant Boat.
"What meanest thou, white-bannered craft,
  Encroaching on my rights?
The ocean's mine, my cannons shine,
  From these Olympian heights.
Minerva might have cradled thee,
  But Jupiter's my sire,
And I could sink yon Battle-ships
  Whose broadsides gleam like fire.

"Reared proudly on this craggy throne,
  I nurse a noble race;
Whilst thou, a speck upon the surge,
  Art rocking at its base.
Like a terrestrial Jove, I guard
  The Harbour from these hills,
And every shot poured hissing hot
  From my volcano kills.

"With every breath I scatter death
  Whene'er my bolts are hurled;
In every crash the lightnings flash,
  My thunders shake the world.
The ministry of Mars is stern,
  And fiercely flames his front,
And there must be some game to boast
  When kings are in the hunt."

The Life-Boat then, with softer speech,
  And sweeter cadence spake,
"I ask no spell of shot and shell,
  At which the world will quake;
'Tis not on thee humanity
  With hope will fondly turn;
Athwart black horror's awful cloud
  Thy lurid splendours burn.
No fame atones for guilty thrones
  By wild Ambition nursed;
Tears, tears begem the diadem
  Of red Revenge accursed.
The nations have grown sick of wars,
  And peoples tired of kings
Who league in might against the right,
  While earth with anguish rings;

"By heroes manned, an earnest band,
  I ne'er from peril swerve;
They need no drum or burning rum
  Their daring souls to nerve.
Their music is the choral-hymn
  Of billows dashing wild,
The mother's prayer, the father's thanks,
  The praise of wife and child.
Oh! swiftly may the day advance
  When Peace shall chant her odes
On all the sunny hills of Time,
  And in all earth's abodes!
When 'mong the guns our brown-cheeked sons
  And blue-eyed maids shall rove
With God's three angels by their side—
  Truth, Temperance, and Love."

THE FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

HAIL! Lighthouse of the Mind,
  Shine gloriously and long;
Thy beams pour on the spirit-blind,
  Uplift the toiling throng.

Shine on the sullen waves
  Of ignorance and care;
O save our Youth from early graves,
  Our Manhood from despair!

Tell poor men they have souls
  To soar on seraph-wings,
While Time in golden cycles rolls,
  As well as Peers and Kings.

And Orient gems and gold
  Are less than Wisdom's worth—
The wealth which every mind can hold
  That boasts immortal birth.

Without regard to sect,
  Dispense thy light each hour;
For Knowledge is the architect
  Of pleasure and of power.

A Beacon-Lamp of Life,
  Above each party-storm;
A refuge 'mid the worldly strife,
  Uprear thy splendid form!

SONG OF THE BEAUTIFUL.

BEAUTY is born of Heaven, 'tis love
In radiance shed from the world above;
'Tis wisdom, and goodness, and joy, and power,
Visibly seen in each bird and flower.
Through the Lover's dream it wings its way,
O'er the Poet's harp its fingers play;
The lowliest heart at its shrine may kneel,
And all the delight of the angels feel.
It raises the soul in praise and prayer,
To Him who made all things good and fair;
And in its enchantment oft hath given
A blessedness less of Earth than Heaven!

Beauty imparts the charm, the spell,
The electric thrill to wood and dell;
It mantles the Earth with gold and green,
And gilds with romance each changing scene.
The diamonds bright, like fossil-stars,
Spring's floral hues, Eve's crimson bars,
All forms, and sounds, and colours unfurled,
Are mirrors of Beauty's wondrous world.
Through each outer sense to the soul it curves,
And pours a balm o'er the fainting nerves;
'Tis the deathless harp on Earth's green sod,
That answers alone to the touch of God!

Beauty is crowned in a noble life,
Pellucid and calm amid hate and strife,
In honest hearts with a purpose strong,
In loving lips and in truthful song,
In virtuous breasts, although clouds be dark,
On brows where Genius lights his spark!
It cheereth all who with glorious aim
Are seeking a higher and holier fame.
It broods like the wings of the gentle dove
In the broken spirit begetting love,
Inspiring hope and awakening thought,
Till Earth to the image of Heaven is wrought.

Beauty! sweet spirit of fadeless youth!
Caress each heart with virtue and truth,
Distil thy grace, and thy breast make bare,
And earth shall a vernal freshness wear!
For, oh! it is sad in a world like this,
So filled with the presence of love and bliss,
That souls should languish in ceaseless strife,
And multitudes perish, cursing life—
That spangled mockeries lure the eye,
While Nature in glory passeth by,
And women and men quaff Folly's cup,
While God's bright picture is here hung up.

THE ROSE AND THE PRIMROSE.

A Rose richly dressed in its mantle of bloom
Hung high on a Brier,—the soul of perfume:
A stream gurgled by with a musical storm,
And imaged the Rose's most beautiful form.

Gazing there on itself, in the clear grassy tide,
Like Narcissus of old, 'twas inflated with pride,
So vain of its beauty, so splendidly dressed,
Forgetting the Thorn that was close to its breast.

A Primrose grew near, in the hedge-row so wild,
The darling of Gipsies, a sisterless child;
A truant it seemed that had wandered away,
And lonely it lingered—an exile of May.

"Ah! ah!" laughed the Rose, "well, well may'st thou pine,
Yon stream bears a far brighter image than thine:
That crystalline mirror my picture will keep,
Till stars falter forth o'er the face of the deep.

"*If I had been born on a bank*, where the sun
Could not by my beauty be conquered and won,
I'd bury my pale face where nought could be seen,
Poor vagrant, attired in thy kirtle of green."

The Primrose felt hurt, in its lowly retreat,
And said, but in accents so simple and sweet,
"Of all the bright flowers which the garden adorn,
Thou hast not a peer, bonnie Rose, on the Thorn.

"Young Love will cull thee to glow on its breast,
Nor dream of the thorns thou hast hid in thy vest;
Yet, like thee, I have life, and to live is to be
An emblem of joy, and a type of the free."

"Stay, stay!" said the Rose, with its mossy robe spread,
"I am couched among leaves where I pillow my head;
From the blast I am sheltered that sweeps o'er my path,
And crushes thee down in the tramp of its wrath."

"Scorn me not," said the Primrose. "I love not to lie
On soft beds of leaves, while there's light in the sky:
I watch for the dew of the morning, and praise
The Giver of good for the breeze and the rays.

"'Tis true thou art nursed in a cradle of leaves;
But the bosom most shut is the one that most grieves:
And many there be who as richly are graced,
Whose faces wear smiles, but whose hearts are a waste.

"Farewell, lovely Rose, all thy taunts are in vain,
On both of us fall the sweet sunshine and rain;
And the blast of the Winter, so brief is our bloom,
Will bury us both in the Mansion of Gloom."

UNFORGOTTEN THINGS.

In Memory's depths, and unforgot,
There oftentimes will lie
Some sad, long-silent, secret spot,
O'er which we love to sigh.
And thoughts and dreams will sweep athwart
The brain, on noiseless wings;
And from their sacred shadow start
Those Unforgotten Things.

The village Church, the rustic well,
The school, the bridge, the stream,
The cot, the daisy-dappled dell,
May fade as doth a dream;
But when bewitching Music's power
Its spell around us flings,
Leap into life that thrilling hour
Those Unforgotten Things.

A Father dear, a Mother kind,
  Who breathed in prayers our name;
And he who taught our youthful mind,
  The friend unknown to fame,—
These from the vista of the Past
  Recording Memory brings,
And shrines, long as our lives shall last,
  'Mong Unforgotten Things.

The vows and promises we made
  To win some wreath of pride;
The love we plighted to the Maid,
  Who strove her joy to hide;
Those faithful hearts of former years,
  When hopes had rainbow-wings,
And Life seemed all too bright for tears,
  Are Unforgotten Things.

Some fragile flower doth hang upon
  Its parent's stronger stem,
A little while that flower is gone,
  Like many another gem.
Time rolls away, green grows the spot,
  And there the Robin sings;
But Time's rude hand can never blot
  Those Unforgotten Things.

Sometimes we gaze on lovely forms,
  To which we fain would kneel;
But hope to gain is wrecked 'mid storms
  The Sea of life must feel.
Time wings in silent flight his way;
  But from the heart there springs
A thought, a sigh, a flash, a ray,
  Of Unforgotten Things.

There's not an evanescent thought,
  There's not an idle word,
There's not a deed in secret wrought,
  There's not a sigh unheard;
But like the fragrance scattered far,
  Of flowers on Zephyr's wings,
Ascends beyond the farthest star,
  'Mong Unforgotten Things.

Lives there a heart so callous, cold,
  Beneath yon arching skies,
That feels like blunted darts these old,
  But sweet and sacred ties;
So dead to every fond appeal
  That from affection springs,
As not in after-years to feel
  These Unforgotten Things?

Ah! I remember passing through
  A Churchyard long-ago,
When one to me most kind and true,
  With tears, was laid below;
And oh! the bitter tears will start
  Again when Memory brings
Those parting sobs writ on my heart
  As Unforgotten Things.

THE FROZEN SKYLARK.

One morn in Spring my way I took
  The forest-path along;
But icy chains had bound the brook,
  And hushed its freedom-song.

Methought the frost was overpast,
  For Daisies were in blow,
When o'er the fair scene swept the blast,
  On pinions fringed with snow.

I marked beneath a stricken flower
  A poor, dead Butterfly:
A pilgrim from some southern bower,
  It came to love and die.

Cold on the ground, where trailed a thorn,
  A Skylark took my ken.
It dying lay, with plumage torn,
  And would not soar again.

My heart was pained to see my friend,
  Nature's sun-songster, writhe,
Ere death his frozen pangs did end,
  For once he was so blithe.

"Dear Bird," I sighed, "fear not my tread,
  It shall not harm thy wing;
I fain would raise thy dying head,
  Sweet Poet of the Spring!

"No Sportsman's hail has pierced thy breast:
  Whence cometh thy despair?
Thy footprints guide me to thy nest;
  Ah! that is cold and bare.

"No sunny banks, with verdure gay,
  No beauteous bowers in bloom;
Nature's bright robe is rent away,
  She wears a shroud of gloom.

"And now the corn-seed fast is locked,
  And leaves bestrew the gale;
The frost and snow thine hunger mocked,
  None heard thy parting wail.

"Could not thy power to sing and soar
  Thee save from this sad lot,
Mingling thy sob with Ocean's roar,
  In this bleak barren spot?

"Oh! what sun-hopes with thee will fade!
  What music-promise fall!
I weep to see thee, Bird, arrayed
  In thy white funeral pall.

"Like thine is oft the Poet's fate,
  Neglect and scorn to feel;
And Pity comes at last, too late
  His broken heart to heal."

Within that solitude the Bird
  In vain I strove to save;
One dying note of thanks I heard,
  Then made for it a grave.

MY EARLY LOVE.

HER cheeks were like the Daybreak's gentle blushing,
When Moonlight lingers in the gloaming hour,
Soft rosy hues 'mid lily-whiteness flushing,
Oh! how I thrilled to Love's impassioned power!
Her eyes were brilliant as the Autumn lightning,
In darkness flashing with a wondrous grace;
Her countenance with lofty beauty brightening,
Methought I gazed upon an Angel's face.

She played; but Music had no charms to win me,
While at her side I sat, and heard her voice.
A new joy, like a star, burned deep within me,
And I could only listen and rejoice.
She had an Artist's kindling touch and vision;
But when she showed me scenes in calm and storm,
I deftly turned from picturings Elysian,
To be entranced by her more beauteous form.

To Church I went, to hear her sweetly singing
Amid that happy band, the village Choir,
And Oh! those tones, how ravishing and ringing!
How could I to such Loveliness aspire?
I've heard her in her parent's Cottage praying,
Among her kindred kneeling side by side,
And felt too base to echo such sweet saying,
And all unworthy e'er to call her Bride.

Yes, I have known Love's deepest, purest feeling,
Its wreathing smiles and wild-escaping sighs,
Like silver doves their hidden nest revealing,
Or incense telling where the violet lies.
She guessed my thoughts, my Soul's intense devotion,
And by a look her own regard confessed:
Her bosom heaved soft as a Summer's ocean,
When first our lips in tenderness were pressed.

Alas! alas! my early Love was taken
To Angel-arms before the Wedding-Morn.
As from a Trance my Spirit seemed to waken,
My Rose had fled, and left a barren thorn.
Methought the Angels their lone-watch were keeping,
A-near her Myrtle-Tree, which blossomed still.
I looked: each pulse in quietude was sleeping,
And every marbly vein had ceased to thrill.

THE DREAM OF THE SEAMSTRESS.

YOUTHFUL Widow, weary-fingered,
Stitching in her garret-room,
By her only Child she lingered
Through the wintry midnight's gloom;
Dreamily her needle plying,
Whispers seemed to haunt the air,
"Parent-stem, thy bud is dying,
Angels need a gem so rare."

Bending o'er her Babe, the Weeper
Kissed her Infant's hectic cheek,
Smoothed its golden curls, and deeper
Grew the grief she could not speak.
Kneeling down, she prayed heart-broken,
"Oh, thou Source of life and joy!
Of Thy mercy grant one token,
Spare, oh, spare my blue-eyed Boy!"

Not one friend to cheer or pity,
Hope to fledge within her heart,
Stranger 'mid the crowded city,
While she wrought her angel-part;
All unknown and unbefriended
O'er her weeny Pet she wept,
Feeling deadened, thought suspended,
Oh, what wonder that she slept!

Half the infelt speechless anguish
Of that Mother who can tell,
Thus to see her floweret languish,
Spite of soft affection's spell?
Death those lovely eyes o'ershading,
Like a cloud the bluebells o'er,
Fading, fading, gently fading,
And to smile on her no more.

Friendly sleep at length came stealing
O'er her heart like music's strain,
Dreams of childhood's hours revealing
Girlhood's charms without a stain:
Some bright Angel on her vision
Drew the picture of her Child,
In those golden fields Elysian,
Where the sun unclouded smiled.

Long she marvelled at the splendour
Of the gardens where he played.
Fragrant wreaths of lilies slender
At her lightsome feet he laid;
And he said, "I came to meet you,
Welcome, Mother, toil is o'er,
Faces fond and fair will greet you,
With the happy smiles of yore."

Jasper fountains sparkling ever
Scattered diamond-dropping showers,
Flashed, like loosened gold, the river,
Singing through unfading bowers;
And to every bliss the portal
Some kind Fairy open threw,
Breathing thoughts and joys immortal,
Fresh and beautiful and true.

Then her wondering heart ceased aching,
In Love's never-dying flame,
And the garment she was making,
Ere she slept, a robe became;
In the radiance rich it shimmered,
With her tears transfigured there
Into precious pearls, which glimmered
Like the stars through frosty air.

Back she gazed, and saw the tossing
Of the Sea in lurid gleams,
O'er which thousands more were crossing
By the rainbow-bridge of dreams.
"We will leave this region never;
We have done with grief," she said;
"Kiss me, Darling—mine for ever!"
Then she woke—*her child was dead!*

WEEP FOR HER A TEAR OF PITY.

WEEP for her a tear of Pity,
Homeless wanderer of the city,
Poor unfortunate, aweary
In the rainy Midnight dreary.

Thou who dwellest in the palace
Bear that poor Girl never malice,
For her guilt must lie before
Her unkind Betrayer's door.

Still, for all her stains and sorrow,
She of Mercy's store may borrow;
And despite of scorn's control,
There's a jewel in her Soul.

Like the spring upon the mountain,
Like the gushing crystal fountain,
Like the soft and fleecy snow
Was her young life long ago.

Once her gentle Mother blessed her,
Once her Father's arms caressed her,
And she played beside the hearth
Of her happy Home in mirth.

Hark! she sings a song of sadness,
Of her Home and all its gladness.
While no ear but Heaven's listens,
And her aching eyelid glistens.

Now she sees her dying Mother,
Grey-haired Father, weeping Brother,
And the dark and evil day
When she fell—as Angels may.

Lo! a cloud of grief hangs o'er her
As the Vision glides before her
Of the Lord's Great Day to come,
When the guilt shall be brought home.

Who among the great or lowly
Is so blameless and so holy,
As to cast a stone upon her
In her misery and dishonour?

Oh! remember that each tear
Shed for erring mortals here,
By the Angels will be shown
As a jewel in your crown.

Oh! this old World might be better
If each hand would break a fetter,
If each one would do his part
To bind up one broken heart.

TO MY BABY ASLEEP.

SLEEP, Baby, sleep! I love to hear thee breathing
The fragrant stillness of the evening air,
While Fancy pictures guardian cherubs wreathing
Their Eden-flowers amid thy golden hair.
Thy pure, pellucid brow than snow is fairer,
Victorious over rose-bloom are thy cheeks;
Thy budding lips waft honied nectar, rarer
Than that the wild bee in the garden seeks.
Sleep, Baby, sleep!

Haply with beauty I've seen Nature teeming,
But never saw aught beautiful as thee,
Thou rosying Dawn! of birds and blossoms dreaming,
Cradled in joy, and nursed in mystery!
Blushing Bud-Future! on thy fate I ponder—
White page, where Thought may print its living line;
God's perfect Poem, full of awe and wonder!
Symbol of all that's beauteous and divine!
Sleep, Baby, sleep!

Sweet Babe! I see thy pearly lids unclosing,
Like gold-fringed clouds that veil the rising sun;
Thy dimpled limbs, in crystal light reposing,
Melodious move, my infant lovely one!
Ah! who would dream that sin lurked in thy nature,
And call thy spotless heart polluted now?
For Loveliness dwells throned on every feature,
And Innocence enwreaths thy cherub brow.
Sleep, Baby, sleep!

Why shouldst thou wake, when waking bringeth sorrow?
Exempt from grief is now thy balmy breast;
The worm may steal into the bud to-morrow,
And thy blue eyes with tear-drops be opprest.
But now mine arms are round thee clasped unshaken;
Thou needst not fear, though Storm is knocking wild,
For while I've strength thou shalt not be forsaken—
Thou life-drop of my heart—my orphan Child!
Sleep, Baby, sleep!

How soft thy smile—thy love how undissembled,
Pure as the dew-washed lily on the lawn!
Yet all mankind thine infant form resembled,
Ere changing skies eclipsed the perfect dawn.
Mayst thou be nursed like an ambrosial blossom,
Amid the smiles a Father's love bestows;
And may thy guileless, joy-illumined bosom
Expand in sunshine like a Summer rose!
Sleep, Baby, sleep!

My pretty Gem! I think of thine hereafter,
When petrifying cares like waves shall come,

And dash with tears thine eyes of childish laughter,
And make thy lips of mirth and music dumb.
God love thee, Babe! and, oh, if He were willing,
Parnassian heights I would not have thee mount;
For wintry frosts to singing-birds are killing,
And who the pangs a Poet feels can count?
Sleep, Baby, sleep!

FRIENDSHIP'S GARLAND BROKEN.

ANTONIO and I were friends in youth.
Heaven beheld with joy our budding Souls,
Clasped by the close-caressing vines of truth,
And upward shooting like two verdant boles.
And when the Springs of youth had fled,
And manhood's Summer crowned each head,
With nobler fruits of high endeavour,
Thought's fadeless skies we mounted,
The orbs galactic counted,
On pinnacles of Fame that shine for ever.

Antonio aspired,
With true ambition fired,
To heights untrodden in the realms of Art,
Where never King was throned,
Or strip of empire owned,
And virgin crowns were for the boldest heart.

Often we sate together
Banqueting on thoughts that never cloy,
Upon a grassy hillock, kingcup-spangled,
Or by the trout-stream and the river angled,
While vales with yellow harvests sang for joy.

And thus we grew
In manhood strong for the full chase of honour.
At length Antonio's path was crossed
By young Priscilla, winning-fair to view,
But to all spirit-beauty lost,
And all his Soul's fresh worship fell upon her.

She was a laughing, blue-eyed girl,
And jealous of his love to any other,
Though it should be his dearest friend or brother;
Her gilded form his Fancy drew,
His Soul entangled by a golden curl.

She had a queenly gait, a swanlike-grace,
A cuplike mouth of coral and of pearl,
Twin-lilies kissed twin-roses on her face,
And he paid homage to the Painter's art,
To wed a lovely Shape—without a heart.

But why complain?
Beauty will thrill man's heart and brain,
Either in leaf, or star, or flower,
And who can resist its mighty power?

Deeply she scooped the pitfall of her schemes,
Wreathing enticing flowers around its brink,
And from her hideous purpose did not shrink,
Till quenched were Friendship's angel-holy beams.

She vowed to drag those heart-nursed tendrils down
From their empyreal crown,
To grovel 'mong the weeds and dust
Of mute suspicion and distrust,
And snap the soft-toned silver strings
Whence Friendship's finger music brings.

But let it pass!
The lie was written on her painted face,
A fool the craft behind her smile might trace;
The cunning spark that lit her glancing eye
Revealed at once her Soul's hypocrisy.
Oh! could she see her true self in her glass!

There is no sun-face high and bright
Which Woman cannot dim,
If so it be her whim;
No reputation which she cannot blight,
Though pure as that of the white Cherubim.
Full-well she knows her power to scan
The soon-ta'en captive heart of man,
For on his face his heart he wears,
When Woman's smile
Doth him beguile,
And round him weave its fascinating snares.

The Slander-Serpent crawls in gloom,
O'er blushing rose and lily pale,
And where Life's best affections bloom
It leaves its loathsome trail.
Antonio, still I often think of thee—
Thy spirit then with mine appears to blend;
And oft, yes oft, must thou remember me,
And all my truth, until thy life shall end.

When seated on the jutting cliff alone,
A soft sea-breeze, a gentle music tone,
A withered nosegay in the twilight's beams,
A plaintive image of our Friendship seems.

Where art thou, gentle Friend?
May time befall thee fair where'er thou art!
Justice will yet be done
To all beneath the Sun,
And all the wrongs man suffers fly,
Or God is but a name, and Life a lie.
This is the Dove I send,
With peace to claim an entrance to thy heart.
Go, little Nightingale, and to him sing;
Drop at his feet, thou freshest, whitest rose!
Him to my side, ye dainty zephyrs, bring;
I long to see him ere mine eyelids close.

For, haply, here I may not tarry long;
And, ah, methinks it were a cold embrace,
A welcome almost mournful as my Song,
To gaze at last upon thy Friend's dead face.

ON THE SANDS AT SUNSET.

FAREWELL to the City's strife,
And its labour-laden air:
Here I feel the pulse of life,
Find an anodyne for care.
With a gentle golden key,
Nature's hand unlocks my breast,
By the calm and emerald Sea
There's an oasis of rest.
Lo! the Sea-birds fly in crowds
Down the valley, o'er the stream,
And the Ships with silver shrouds
Move like maidens in a dream.
Oh! I feel again a boy,
As I hear the Lark's wild strains,
Nature's sweet and holy joy
Kindles rapture in my veins.
I sit and dream in the Sunset's gleam
On the sands by the Ocean shore,
While the snowy sail is spread to the gale,
And flashes the boatman's oar.

Gold and silver in the fields
I can gather if I will,
And if wealth they cannot yield,
They can cheer and charm me still.
I can hear the Sea-boy sing
From this rude unchiselled stone,
And am happier than a king
On his diamond-jewelled throne,
There's a shower of delight
On the ardent apple-bloom,
And the plum and pear are bright,
As stars in their leafy gloom.
Pendent flowers are on the bush
Where the luscious currants grow,
And a tranquillising hush
Where the waves in music flow.
I sit and dream in the Sunset's gleam
On the sands by the Ocean shore,
While the snowy sail is spread to the gale,
And flashes the boatman's oar.

Round those vast and tossing tides
No Despot can bind a chain;
Freedom's Ark at anchor rides
On the glorious rolling Main.
And that Minstrel, grey and grand,
A melody chants to me,
That Old England's seagirt strand
Shall be free, for ever free.
But gone is a gentle voice,
And pattering feet I miss;
For they made my heart rejoice
When they shared its love and bliss.
Oh! tell me, ye dashing waves,
Whose crests are aflush with gold,
If e'er by these cliffs and caves
They'll roam as in days of old?
I sit and dream in the Sunset's gleam
On the sands of this earthly shore,
And I wait for the sail of the Boatman pale
From the silent Evermore.

THE MAIDEN AND THE MAY-BLOSSOMS.

MAY-MORN blushed red as roses,
The birds did mate and sing,
A Maiden fair with posies
I met beside the spring;
Love from her heart was gushing
Through eyes so blue and meek,
And pink May-blossoms blushing
Through white ones on her cheek.

With hands as fair as lilies,
A branch of May's twin bloom
She held, and daffodillies,
Whose breath was rich perfume
Thick sprays of hawthorn budding,
And lilac-clustered stems,
Ambrosial violets studding
Her breast like floral gems.

I said, "Fair morn! sweet Maiden,
Thou shouldst be Queen of May,
With festal flowerets laden,
And Love is King to-day;
Rare artist, he with graces
Divine life's cloud can gild,
His flattering pencil traces
A Future glory-filled."

She said, "Your praise estranges
Regard; please, say no more;
For love, man's love, it changes,
Like sand-words on the shore;
Frail, fickle, false for ever,
'Tis but a meteor's flame,
A rainbow o'er the river,
And is not worth the name.

My Mother claims my duty,
My labour, love, and care;
The crown of May for beauty
My head will never wear;
But I would wreathe at leisure
My chaplet on the green,
To deck her brow with pleasure
Who is to be the Queen!"

And so we sped beguiling
The time which gaily flew,
And bashfully down-smiling,
She near the Maypole drew,
And there she laid her garland
The May-Queen's brow to bind,
But Earth, and all the Star-land,
None fair as she could find.

We reached her Home parental,
Of May-days whispering still:
She said, in tones so gentle,
"Choose now which flowers you will."

With admiration trembling,
I answered, "You I seek:
Grant me those flowers resembling
May-blossoms on your cheek."

With half-consent we parted,
But met again ere long,
Amid the joyous-hearted
And simple Village throng;
The lads and lasses raised her,
Although she said them Nay,
So fair was she all praised her,
And crowned her Queen of May.

Those living flowers were granted,
She's mine, for ever mine,
Queen of my heart that panted
To worship at her shrine;
She's mine, she's mine for ever,
On earth, in heaven alway;
I kneel and thank the Giver,
I met her in the May.

MAY WREATHS OF PEACE CROWN ENGLAND!

MAY wreaths of Peace crown England!
Is every good man's prayer;
And may she reign without a stain,
As glorious as she's fair!
Long may she lay her mighty hand
On Ocean's mane of waves;
The rocky land of heroes grand,
That every tempest braves!

May wreaths of Peace crown England!
And Nature paint her charms;
And o'er each head the Olive spread,
And quell all dire alarms!
The Dove upon her helmet sit,
To shame the Vulture's part;
In Freedom's rays her banners blaze,
True grandeur in her heart!

May wreaths of Peace crown England!
Oh! tell me where the Sun
Shines on a throng so fair and strong
As hers from thraldom won?
With starry azure crowned each night,
And gleaming pearl each day,
The old Red Rose in glory blows
Through fadeless Summers gay!

May wreaths of Peace crown England!
The Pharos of all lands;
The Champion bright of truth and right
And Chivalry she stands.
Well might Rome's famous Emperor
An English child admire;
The Babes that British Mothers bear
Inherit ancient fire.

May wreaths of Peace crown England!
Brave Oak that never bends;
She hath still a blow for a haughty foe,
And a welcome for her Friends.
Far in the Past, with footprints red,
She burst the Roman yoke.
The White Land rang with Battle-clang,
And gave back stroke for stroke.

May wreaths of Peace crown England!
When outraged Honour calls,
She will not sleep upon the deep
Behind her floating walls.
The crested waves rock on their breast
The men who guard her name,
And on those rearing billow-steeds
Our Fathers rode to Fame.

THE BLUE, MAJESTIC SKY.

THE blue majestic Sky I love,
'Tis Nature's jewelled dome;
The stars are flowers in fields above,
Through which the Angels roam;
And whether robed in moonbeams bright,
Or Cloudland's ebon pall,
God, from His throne, both day and night,
Looks down with smiles on all.

Thou hast, oh Sky! a thrilling voice,
A Song of seraph-birth,
Whose chorus is, "Rejoice, rejoice,
For Heaven embraces Earth."
The hand of Time on every face
In grief and care we scan,
But ever-blooming youth and grace
Adorn thy braided span.

The lover breathes his vows to Heaven,
Watched by the Moon and Star;
The mariner when tempest-driven
Surveys that chart afar.
The Poet's thoughts flow free and fast
When night is wreathed with smiles,
And silver clouds like ships sail past
Ten thousand starry isles.

The felon base, the gipsy wild,
The outcast in the street,
Look at the Sky—from home exiled—
With feelings pure and sweet;
And every child in every clime
Feels that a God is nigh,
While gazing at that arch sublime,
The universal Sky.

Thank God for sunshine and for showers,
Rich gifts, untaxed and free,
For sun and moon, for stars and flowers,
Light, air, green sod, and sea!
And for that glory-blazoned frame,
Ethereal, grand, and pure,
Where thunders roll and lightnings flame,
The roof of rich and poor.

LOVE UNDER THE LINDENS.

FROM the Ball-room's flashing throng,
  Come, my Darling, let us steal
Where the lindens shake with song,
  There my true love to reveal.
Oh! I pray thee to forgive
  This long silence of my breast;
But I could not longer live
  With affection unexpressed.

Thou art blushing, smiling now;
  I have spoken not in vain.
Let me kiss thy snowy brow,
  Which shall never throb with pain.
One in heart, love, thou and I;
  For I love thee, Darling, more
Than yon planet loves the sky—
  Than the ocean loves the shore.

Girlhood rounds to womanhood,
  As doth round the perfect rose.
Yes; I know thee fair and good,
  All my hopes in thee repose.
Clasp thy lily hand in mine,
  As the vine and oak, my Sweet;
Thus our souls shall intertwine
  While the pulse of life shall beat.

Duty calls, and we must part,
  Part until the time arrives,
When, in joining hand and heart,
  We shall crown with joy our lives;
And, though lowly be our Cot,
  Yet a palace it will seem,
With thy love to cheer my lot,
  Dearest Angel of my dream!

Friends have proved not what we dreamed,
  Chance and change must come to all:
Lips that sweet as honey seemed
  Turn with keen rebukes to gall.
Ah! how many share the feast,
  When the wine-cup circles round,
Who will comfort us the least
  When the board's no longer crowned?

When thy locks shall change with years,
  Love shall flow like ruddy wine—
When I've nought to give but tears,
  All those heart-drops shall be thine;
Last upon my thoughts each night,
  When I bend in prayer my knee,
First, when dawns the morning's light,
  Oh, my love, thy name shall be!

FISHERMAN'S SONG TO HIS BOAT.

A SONG, a song, to thee, my Boat,
  Laid up on thy shingly bed,
For thy sails no more will float
  Where the Sea-mew shrills her note,
  In the blue Sky overhead.
Now thou art shorn and stark,
  Like an old man's feeble form,
And thy days die down the dark;
Rest thee, high and dry, my Bark,
  Nor brave again the storm.

Where the prouder craft would wreck
  I have felt thy pulses thrill
To my own, from keel to deck,
Like a steed, with flowing neck,
  Racing over vale and hill.
When the Sun in pomp had set,
  And the gale blew on my brow,
From the windlass swung my net,
Floating with the white foam wet
  From thy undulating prow.

Saucy siren! fairy free!
  Dumb companion of my life;
Fearless falcon of the Sea,
Never boat could fly like thee
  As a spirit through the strife;
Thou didst answer to my hand
  When the breakers rolled and roared
Round the bay, along the strand;
And didst seem to understand
  That thy Master was aboard.

Whistling loud, I loved to roam
  Yon wild Ocean, bonny skiff!
And I dared the dashing foam
For the dear ones' sake at home,
  In my Cottage on the cliff.
No brown reaper of the soil
  Of a richer harvest dreamed
Than I gathered in my toil,
When my nets of scaly spoil
  Like a living Rainbow gleamed.

Swiftest runner in the race,
  First thy spider's-web to sweep,
While the windlass sung apace,
And a swarm of boats gave chase
  As the fins flashed through the deep.
On a moonlit night and fine,
  'T was a sight to thrill the soul;
Gold and jewels from the mine
Of Golconda could not shine
  Like the splendour of the shoal.

In thine arms I oft have lain
  Through the solemn night alone,
Rocking on the spangled main,
While the Stars like golden rain
  Falling, shooting, sparkling shone.
And those moments sweet and calm
  Brooded round me like a dove,
O'er my spirit stole like balm,
Or the music of a psalm
  From some fairer world above.

LOVE AT THE SEA-SIDE.

"THE Summer is bright and blue, Alice,
  The sands by the Sea are gay;
A Maiden so lovely and true, Alice,
  Should be as merry as May.

Like Sea-flowers are thine eyes, Alice,
Thy lips like crimson leaves,
And yet with plaintive sighs, Alice,
Thy spotless bosom heaves.
Come, come and be my own, love!
Mine arms shall be thy zone, love,
And thou shalt be Queen
Of all the scene—
Yon ivied crag thy throne, love!

"Sweet is Love when the moon, Alice,
Smiles through her silver veil,
When trills the cherub tune, Alice,
Of evening's Nightingale.
The woodbine-trellised bowers, Alice,
Breathe then a fairy spell,
And dew-bespangled flowers, Alice,
Speak Love's own language well.
The rarest Rose might blush, love,
To see the radiant flush, love,
Which glows on thy cheek;
Come, come and seek
With me the green grove's hush, love."

"The fringe of a fiery cloud, Henry,
Ere long may robe the sky;
The smiling earth in a shroud, Henry,
With all its bloom may lie;
The Sea-flowers will grow pale, Henry,
The crimson leaves will fade,
And Beauty's shell is frail, Henry,
Till with Truth's pearls inlaid.
So if thou lovest me, say, love,
Why comest thou not by day, love?
Of moonlight love
I cannot approve,
For in tears it melts away, love.

"Wilt love me when Life's sun, Henry,
Its golden head lays down;
When Hope's stars, one by one, Henry,
Fade from my spirit's crown;
When earthly grief shall come, Henry,
And blight the beauteous rose;
Nay, till Death's hand benumb, Henry,
This heart for thee that glows?
If 'Yes' thou speakest, come, love!
Together we will roam, love,
Where the echoes skim
Of the Evening Hymn,
That floats from my Cottage-home, love."

"This shall my answer be, Alice:
If thou wilt be my bride,
I'll never love but thee, Alice,
Whatever change betide.
The love which can grow dim, Alice,
Is but a carnal flame—
A bubble on the brim, Alice,
A false and fleeting name;
So bear, 'mid calm or strife, love,
The crowning name of Wife, love.
Earthly alloy
Shall ne'er destroy
The gold of Wedded life, love.

"Wear now my Bridal gift, Alice,
United be our hands.
Fly we where Ocean's drift, Alice,
Melts on the sparkling sands—
Where perfumes lull the sense, Alice,
And gladness grief beguiles;
Soft gales shall waft us hence, Alice,
Where cloudless azure smiles.
Come, come and be my own, love!
Mine arms shall be thy zone, love,
And thou shalt be Queen
Of all the scene,
The rocky cliff thy throne, love!"

THE LOVER'S FAREWELL.

FAREWELL! Lo, the bright dream is broken
That cheated my heart,
The word that divides us is spoken,
And sped is the dart;
The torch that Love lighted for ever
Is darkened to me,
And Hope can rekindle it never,
And now thou art free.

Farewell! pretty Maiden, beguiling
My soul with thy spell,
Thy vows were as sunlit foam smiling
Where sunken rocks dwell;
Thy love, like the Summer's gay roses,
When Summer is o'er;
But mine, like the holly, reposes
And blooms evermore.

Farewell! the cold winds of November
Shall echo the strain—
Farewell! I can only remember
My love was in vain—
Farewell! the delusion is over,
The vision of bliss—
Farewell! go embrace thy new lover,
And glow in his kiss.

Farewell! but I will not upbraid thee—
The fault is not thine—
For love and devotion are paid thee
At Wealth's gilded shrine;
But the flowers which grow on the mountains
Bloom not half so sweet
As those in the valleys, by fountains,
That smile at our feet.

Farewell! fickle Maiden; a warning
From me, ere too late,
Oh! becloud not thy bridal morning,
Whate'er is my fate.
Think! were it not better to tarry,
Than a tinselled Lie,
A Shape that has no Soul, to marry—
Then loathe it and die?

Farewell! may thy bright brow be braided
With fair, fadeless flowers;
May the sun of thy joy ne'er be shaded
Through life's golden hours;

May the hand of true love ever weave thee
A chaplet divine;
But no heart that esteems thee, believe me,
Is truer than mine.

A SONG OF PROGRESS.

THE World, arrayed in glory,
Rolls proudly round the sun;
The Stars sing freedom's story
As through the Sky they run;
And conquering Roman legions
The truth could never kill,
That earth, with its fair legions,
Moves onward, onward still.

'Mid countless rays of splendour
She lifts her beauteous face;
Heaven's starry hosts attend her,
And wreathe her brow with grace.
New grandeur life is taking,
While mental bonds are riven,
And if no hearts were aching,
Earth might resemble heaven.

Leave passion's shrine: be busy—
Zealous for human weal;
Lips from the Wine-cup dizzy,
Your manhood it doth steal.
Then will your toil be lightened,
And honey fill your hives,
And Home will glisten, brightened
By smiling Babes and Wives.

Oh! think what weary fingers
Are plied among the poor,
While lean Want, wolf-eyed, lingers
Anear the Workman's door!
They help to make the Morning—
Each beam and drop of dew;
And, oh! the world's adorning
Belongs, each man, to you.

Pilots! up from your pillows!
The good ship needs your hand
To guide it through the billows:
Why do ye downcast stand?
The idle helm is swinging,
Winds blow and wavelets curl;
Hands to the work with singing,
And let the windlass whirl!

Coy Fortune waits to meet you:
Unfurl your drooping sails,
And sweet success will greet you,
Fair skies and favouring gales.
Let hope's bright flame die never—
The golden prospect scan,
When earth shall bloom for ever,
The Paradise of man!

THE WELCH EXILE TO CAMBRIA.

DEAR Cambria! my home, how I love thee!
Wild region of mountain and flood!
Fair land with the blue heavens above thee—
Loved shrine of the brave and the good;
With grandeur thy Castles were fashioned,
There's strength in thy language and race—
Thy Women have beauty impassioned,
Thy sons have both valour and grace.

From the Past's red sod, lo! 'tis growing—
Fair Liberty's blossoming tree!
And the breath of the Lord is blowing,
Till His harvests shall ripened be;
May the bells of thy Temples keep ringing,
And echo ring back from each glen—
Glad news of Redeeming Love bringing,
To bless the brave Women and Men!

Thou seem'st like a Lighthouse erected
By good men engulfed in the waves;
Long, long shall their names be respected—
They rule us like kings from their graves.
Flash, flash o'er the spray of the breakers,
That roar round the youth of our land,
And the glory shall all be thy Maker's,
Who raised thee 'mid perils to stand.

I pray that thy Sons and thy Daughters,
In virtue, and beauty, and pride,
Like Olives that grow by the waters,
May flourish in strength by thy side;
That the sensual Cup may be broken,
And hurled in Oblivion's deeps;
Of moral disgrace 'tis the token,
While outraged Humanity weeps.

Bold realm of the wild, rugged mountains,
Thy manhood for ever hold dear,
And lovely thy crystalline fountains
And picturesque peaks shall appear.
Far better than valleys all golden
Are men of the God-fearing stamp,
And heroes like those of Time olden
Who shook the earth's thrones with their tramp.

Oh, Motherland, why do I love thee?
As the needle inclines to the pole,
Whatever roof bendeth above me,
My passion points still to thy goal;
And fain would I warble thy praises,
My tribute-song lay at thy feet,
For until it rests under the daisies
My heart to thy music shall beat!

I love thee because of thy story,
When bursting from Tyranny's thrall,
When Bards decked with garlands of glory
Were welcomed in cottage and hall;
I love thee because of thy Martyrs,
Whose cherished graves hallow thy sod,
And because of thy glorious charters,
Which hold by the Bible and God!

As a lover his Bride, so sincerely,
I love thy green sunlighted hills,
As a child its own Mother, so dearly,
I love thy wild musical rills.
May the cloudlets of heaven drop blessings,
Enriching thy emerald breast,
And the Ocean with gentlest caressings
Of Freedom still sing round thy nest.

I've stood 'mong thy mountains and listened,
While thunders rolled deep in the wind,
And when on their proud foreheads glistened
A crown with red lightnings entwined;
And like the bold eagle, my spirit
Exulted 'mid tempest and storm,
For I felt it a joy to inherit
A region no power can deform.

Enthroned like a Queen where the billows
In foam-crested majesty roll,
Snatch, snatch thy wild harp from the willows,
Oh, Wales! and enkindle the soul.
May the Olives of Peace, free from canker,
With Plenty's fruits smile on thy sod,
In the Ocean of Life cast thine anchor,
By faith in the future and God!

LABOUR'S PEACE-MARCH.

THE Future's largest promise yet
Is in faith's union seed,
When sympathy shall self forget,
Love hallow every deed.

No more the clang of meeting swords
To earth shall sorrow bring,
The dulcet clash of silver words
Instead of these shall ring.

A nobler race shall earth adorn,
Of mighty queens and kings,
With souls in royal splendour born
To flash immortal wings.

The thinking mind, the conscience clear,
The fearless faith of old,
Shall render man to man more dear
Than pedigrees and gold.

Angelic forms through vernal bowers,
Where health is free, shall rove,
And Childhood kiss its sister flowers
Strewn by all-powerful love.

Heaven aid the men who fraternize
To claim free Nature's spoil,
Till idle Wealth shall veil its eyes
Before the rank of Toil.

A LIFE HISTORY.

I KNEW her when a simple Child,
By butterflies and flowers beguiled;
With snowy frock and sash of blue,
Proud of her tiny crimson shoe.

I tossed her up in frolic freak,
Her ringlets dancing on my cheek;
While on her face, so fresh and young,
The blushing bloom of beauty hung.

She grew in Girlhood, pensive, fair;
Her look was like a silent prayer,
And newly-budding joys and dreams
Suffused her brow like morning's beams;
And in the heaven of her eyes
Her Spirit's snowy wings would rise,
Till all her paths were holy ground,
With loving faces smiling round.

But, ah! what change came o'er her soul,
What subtle Fiend life's jewels stole?
The Eden of her heart laid waste,
The image God had made defaced?
In gauds she flaunted, and grew bold,
And coined her kisses into gold;
And when at length she sighed and slept,
Her Guardian-Angel watched and wept.

Ah! this was passion's bitter fruit,
Wild mirth with madness at its root;
With present pleasure, future fears,
A drop of bliss, a sea of tears.
Oh, Love! how fatal thine excess!
Oh, World! how slow art thou to bless!
Oh, Heart! thou art a fallen vine!
Oh, God! there is no love like Thine!

I saw her when she dying lay,
Forsaken, friendless, cast away,
No Mother's hand to raise her head,
One sinful Sister by her bed;
No darling Child her lips to press,
No kindred heart with kind caress;
And there upon the barren floor
Her last sad hours she counted o'er.

One Morn I saw her Funeral start,
The hearse seemed rolling o'er my heart;
I followed it, and heard the bell
Toll o'er her grave a doleful knell;
I stood in silence by her bier,
And mingled many a sigh and tear;
Perchance her charms beyond the tomb
In more congenial climes would bloom.

'Tis said in ashes roses grow,
And flower-germs live 'neath Winter's snow
That crystals strew the desert coast,
And nothing good was ever lost;
And so, 'mid earthly sins and stains,
Methinks some Angel-part remains—
Some gem of worth, some floweret fair,
If we would only seek with care.

SHAKE HANDS AND BE FRIENDS

SHAKE hands and be Friends, by affection u
broken,
The pearl-chain of virtue that springs fro
the heart,

Which is anchored in Heaven, of honour the token,
And a Friendship so sacred can never depart.
Shake hands and be Friends.

The scornful may sting thee, the faithless may sadden:
March thou on bravely, still looking above;
And He will be near thee, to guide and to gladden,
And blessedness send in a gush of true love.
Shake hands and be Friends.

Climb the proud heights of thy noble ambition;
Bay-wreaths are glistening ripe for thy hand;
Turn not aside from thy glorified mission—
Though bitter thy struggle, thy purpose is grand.
Shake hands and be Friends.

Thy heart be the shrine of the good and the dutiful,
Wafting sweet music from earth to the sky;
Sing, in the dawn of the True and the Beautiful,
Of Love and Devotion, perfumed with a sigh.
Shake hands and be Friends.

Aloft on thy coronet Mind-gems shall sparkle
Like star-hosts that jewel the rich crown of Night.
Though Sorrow may come with its shadows to darkle,
Thy Soul shall be gilded with glory and light.
Shake hands and be Friends.

Not always our path through the world may be vernal;
But let us be honest and true to the end,
And at last we may meet in the Mansion eternal,
And bask in the smile of our Father and Friend.
Shake hands and be Friends.

AN INFANT'S LULLABY.

BABY, in thy cradle bed,
Dreaming of the flowers,
Softly rest thy cherub head,
Pillowed from the showers;
Mother's arms are round thee cast,
And thou needst not fear the blast.

Slumber, birdie, dewdrop sweet,
Rose-leaf of the sod,
Glowing sonnet, fresh and neat
From the hand of God!
On thy brow His name doth shine—
Lovely imageship divine.

Dream-enchanted is thy breast,
Free from grief and guile;
Angels in thy dimples rest,
Heaven is in thy smile.
When thou wakest from thy sleep,
May it ne'er be thine to weep.

Grow to throne a kingly mind,
Shrine a kindly heart;
Seek the pearls of thought to find,
Heal another's smart.
If to thee such grace be given,
Thou shalt live for earth and heaven.

THE POET TO HIS BLIND CHILD.

"WHAT grieveth me most is to leave behind me my poor blind daughter."—JOHN BUNYAN'S LETTERS.

FARE thee well, my poor blind Daughter,
Tender germ in winter sown;
On the land or on the water
Heaven will comfort thee, my own.
God will bless thee, He will cheer thee,
He will make His winds blow kind;
Though unseen, He will be near thee,
For He knows that thou art blind.

Bendeth heaven's blue arch above thee,
All around thee, too, is fair;
And this trial shall but prove thee
Worthy of thy Maker's care.
He who calmed the raging billow,
And the multitude who fed,
Can make soft thy thorny pillow,
And provide thee board and bed.

To us pilgrims through the valley
Rough has been the road of life,
Every street, and lane, and alley
Thronged with toil, and fear, and strife.
Life begins and ends in sorrow,
It is but a falling tear;
Little hearthling, God's to-morrow
Will make all this darkness clear.

Pride is decked in robes of splendour,
We are clad in bald attire;
Wealth hath luxuries to attend her,
We have little food and fire.
Love of lucre makes men crazy;
Souls are bartered, lives are sold;
Yet I would not change a daisy
Or a buttercup to gold.

I would lay my book of glory
At thy feet, my little Maid,
With our own lives' touching story
In its fragrant leaves portrayed.
And when thou didst come to know it
By some reader's accents mild,
Thou wouldst feel how much the Poet
Loved his poor blind darling Child.

Ah! no more adown dells vagrant
Shall I lead thee flowers to seek,
And through pansied meadows fragrant,
Where the zephyrs fanned thy cheek;
By the brawling brooklet gleaming,
Where the hawthorn-hedges bend,
With its murmurous music seeming
Like the soft voice of a friend.

Long ago, my fair vale-lily,
Died that saint thy Mother dear,
Thoughts of old-time sorrows fill me—
Thoughts enhallowed by a tear.
Gazing on the Golden City,
Her last prayer was thee to bless—

"On my blind girl look with pity,
God protect the motherless!"

Fare thee well, dear child of blindness;
Be thy spirit free from stains,
And, oh, may the world's unkindness
Never freeze thy tender veins!
Thou shalt wear celestial graces,
If thou only faithful prove,
Thou shalt look upon our faces
In the Paradise above.

LITTLE BLANCHE.

THIS dear little child lost her life in "The Fatal Fire" which occurred at the house of her parents in the West End of London. Mrs. Barrett, her mother, has written a touchingly sweet account of her in a small book bearing the above title.

> "Thou wert ordained a vest to wear,
> Not made like ours of clay,
> But woven with the beams of clearest day,
> A Cherub fair."
>
> W. E. GLADSTONE.

BLANCHE'S laugh is silent—
Silent now for ever;
Bands of happy spirits
Rowed her o'er the river.
Angels said, "Sweet Sister,
You must come up hither,
Where earth's flowers are planted,
Nevermore to wither."

Blanche's laugh is silent—
Silent now for ever;
Ere to tears it darkened,
For her came the Giver.
In the Shepherd's bosom
My white lamb is folden:
Blanche in Heaven is smiling,
In the sunshine golden!

Blanche's laugh is silent—
Silent now for ever;
And a lovelier idol
Mother worshipped never.
Rosebud cheeks with dimples,
Eyes that strangely drew you,
And a Soul of sweetness
Softly melting through you.

Blanche's laugh is silent—
Silent now for ever;
From my heart grief's shadow
Will be lifted never.
Who would dream a Baby
Brought such joy and sorrow,
Left a chasm in dying,
Deepening every morrow?

Blanche's laugh is silent—
Silent now for ever;
Fairest flowers will wither,
Truest hearts must sever.
She is shrined in glory,
Like a pilot-planet,
Me to guide 'mid tempests,
And by rocks of granite.

Blanche's laugh is silent—
Silent now for ever;
But that sun, the Spirit,
Setteth never—never!
Blanche! sweet Blanche! will meet me
By the portals pearly
Of the Golden City,
Where she soared so early.

TO A SKYLARK SINGING IN A SNOWSTORM.

THIS poem was composed at Helpstone, near the grave of John Clare, the Northamptonshire Poet.

FEATHERY snowflakes fast descending
Beat against thy tender breast;
Why art thou, sweet Bird, ascending
From thy hillock-sheltered nest?
Crows in crowds are homeward hieing,
Fearful as they front the storm;
Why, oh! why, then, art thou flying
With the tempest round thy form?

Earth, perchance, has grown too narrow
For thy free and fearless wing;
High above yon grassy barrow
From this hill I hear thee sing,
Sing thy sonnet to the Giver,
Where no flashing gleam is shed,
Pouring forth of song a river,
Hail and snow around thy head.

Faith from thee might learn a lesson,
When Earth's transient glories cease,
Fearlessly 'mid clouds to press on,
Through the Shadow-Land, to peace;
Sister Hope might cast her anchor
Bravely in the Silent Bay,
Joy, without the rosebud's canker,
Sing Life's fleeting cares away.

While the northern blast is blowing,
Thou art joyous, light, and brave;
Why should human tears be flowing?
Why should man be Nature's slave?
Richest tones thy voice is flinging,
Tonic Sol-fa music deep;
Beauteous cherub! skyward singing,
Who can hear thy song and weep?

It is love that gives thy pinion
Strength to soar so high and long,
Fires thy breast for heaven's dominion,
Cheers thy path, and tunes thy song.
Like some Sapphic poet's metre
Flows thy music, happy Bird!
And, methinks, 'tis nobler, sweeter,
Thus amid the tempest heard.

Like an exulting Spirit,
White-robed in its heavenward flight,
Singing, while the angels hear it,
Thou upsoarest hid from sight.

Fainting heart! spring from the furrow
If for Heaven is breathed thy sigh,
Trust in God for strength when sorrow
Like a snowstorm shrouds the sky.

THE COTTAGE AUCTION IN A COUNTRY VILLAGE.

THE events narrated in this poem occurred more than twenty-five years ago, not far from Marple, in Cheshire, the Author's birthplace. His father was Lodge-Keeper at a Cotton-Mill. The Mill-Owner, having seen his name on "The Wesleyan Local Preachers' Plan," called him into the counting house, and informed him that his services would be no longer required, unless he discontinued his Ministerial duties. It is needless to state which alternative was decided on, although involving a succession of most distressful circumstances. All things, however, were working together for good; for he was subsequently accepted in the evangelical brotherhood of the "Manchester City Mission," where he now is; and his labours, which are most congenial to his mind, have been blessed abundantly.

WE lived within a Cottage neat,
A flowery nook beside,
And from the porch the jessamine sweet
Shook fragrance far and wide;
The garden glowed with fruits and flowers,
And blossoms clustered o'er the bowers.

Early and late my Father wrought
'Neath iron-handed sway;
He dared to speak his honest thought,
And so was sent away;
To men with prejudice stone-blind,
He is a churl who speaks his mind.

He loved the truth and bore the ban—
The Cross the Martyr bears;
Still proud to be an upright man,
And free from slavish cares.
Who fears the truth? Who doubts the Right?
They have their Heroes day and night.

However swift the needle sped
In my poor Mother's hand,
She could not find us all in bread,
So many in a band;
Then she fell sick, and Tommy died—
I sat beside his grave and cried.

Methinks I see him now so gay,
With every shining tress,
Just like a bloomy bud of May
In natural loveliness.
None have we *lost* that God has given,
But we have five sweet flowers in Heaven.

That very Morn the happy Lark
Its matin lyric sang,
While we mourned in our chamber dark
With many a piercing pang;
For Tommy was the pride of all,
He *was so witty, fair, and tall.*

Then came a monster of mankind,
Down in our Cot he sate,
My Mother's face appeared resigned,
Whate'er might be our fate;
But Father's eye flashed fire, and there
He stood, the image of despair.

The Auctioneer said, "Going! gone!"
And sacked our pretty Cot;
Things we had purchased one by one
He bargained in a lot.
In legal panoply arrayed,
He plied his cruel, thankless trade.

With great feet on our cushioned chair,
His lolling tongue he rolled,
While all his jackal train did stare
To see our treasures sold;
And craving hunger could not turn
The Landlord from his purpose stern.

My Father's books, a costly store,
Were brandished ceiling high,
And callous fingers thumbed them o'er,
'Mid cries of, "Who will buy?"
The "Bible" Mother's feelings crossed,
But "Bloomfield's Poems" touched me most.

The polished clock, with pictured face,
Of Ruth 'mid sheaves of corn,
The drawers, the cage, the glass book-case,
My Grandsire's bugle-horn;
My Father's flute, my Mother's chair,
And Tommy's cradle—all were there.

Each after other passed 'mid tears,
To that dull hammer's swing,
The funeral knell of blissful years
It seemed to me to ring;
I thought with feelings smarting sore,
There is no mercy for the Poor.

Oh, what a picture was that scene
Ere Sorrow changed its look—
Our moss-thatched Cottage on the green
Where flowed the rippling brook!
The daisied knoll, the bridge, the Mill,
And thoughts of Home-wreck haunt me still.

Just at that hour when hope seemed past
My Mother homeward flew:
God ope'd a way for us at last,
That sea of trouble through.
The debt was paid, the harpies fled,
Our Home was saved, joy-tears we shed.

GIVE BLESSINGS, MY BROTHERS, TO EACH AND ALL.

BLESSING-words have a magical spell
To soften the sigh of a sad farewell:
They follow the Pilgrim's steps like a prayer,
When his heart is pierced with arrows of care;
And sweetly within him their music rings,
For they fledge with strength Hope's fainting wings;

With glory they gird the cot and hall;
Give blessings, my Brothers, to each and all.

Ah! many there be whom a curse hath driven
Far from the reach of the hand of Heaven.
On the verge of the scornful world they stand,
As if they were marked with a felon's brand:
No beauty for them in the hills and plains,
No music for them in the song-bird's strains:
Out of God's sunlight they seem to crawl;
Give blessings, my Brothers, to each and all.

When the young Girl leaves her native shire,
For the City's throngs, with their gay attire,
Where many a wolf doth lurk untold,
To snatch the lamb from its gentle fold,
Where fiends on the floweret's fragrance feed,
Then cast it down like the vilest weed,
Its beauty and balm gone past recall;
Give blessings, my Brothers, to each and all.

When the Toiler leaves his own dear land
To gather sheaves on a foreign strand,
And his heart is full as he calls to mind
Sisters and Brothers and Neighbours kind,
The simple flowers of the lane hedgerows,
And the green Churchyard where the loved repose;
Ah! many a fear will his heart appal!
Give blessings, my Brothers, to each and all.

When the Soldier stands on the crowded beach,
With his soul too full of tears for speech,
And his bosom is burning with martial fire,
As fearless he flies to the Battle dire:
His noble face ye may see no more,
His bones may bleach on a distant shore,
His body be wrapped in a gory pall;
Give blessings, my Brothers, to each and all.

When the vessel heaves on the treacherous tide,
And the Sailor clasps his sorrowing Bride,
Oh! think of the dangers his life must know,
With the tempest around him, the sea below.
His Babes will kneel by the vacant chair,
His Wife will breathe his dear name in prayer,
And the God of storms will hear their call;
Give blessings, my Brothers, to each and all.

To all who have erred; to the Outcast wild,
To Widow and Orphan and wandering Child,
To Merit down-crushed by the heel of Wrong,
To Genius struggling the clouds among;
Speak kindly phrases that leave no smart;
They drop like dew on the drooping heart:
Like angel-whispers they seem to fall;
Give blessings, my Brothers, to each and all.

There 's noble work for each hand to do,
Harvests of good, if the seed be true.
The prayers that spring from a loving soul
May make the future a brightened goal.
Oh! tears of sympathy, softly shed,
May heal some spirit whose hope hath fled,
May deck with blossoms the gloomy pall;
Give blessings, my Brothers, to each and all.

Yes, human life is a changeful thing,
Like the chequered course of a mountain spring;
Now rippling on, with a sunny smile,
Anon reflecting a cloudlet isle:
Through rocks and meadows and caves 't will roam,
And mingle at last in its Ocean-home.
As it winds along in its flow and fall,
Give blessings, my Brothers, to each and all.

Some of the hands which we grasped of old,
And the lips we kissed, in the grave are cold;
And many we knew as our friends of yore
Are braving the world as we've done before.
The years, like waves, are following fast,
And we shall be all submerged at last.
Seaward we 're gliding, whate'er befall;
Give blessings, my Brothers, to each and all.

THE SUMMER RAIN.

COMPOSED after a long period of hot, dry weather.

COME down, wild Rain, come down!
I love to hear thee rattling on the roof,
Greening the woodlands with their leafy crown,
Freshening the blossoms with thy sheeny woof:
I love to hear thee pattering on the pane.
Come down, wild Rain!

Out in the starless Night
I hear thee sobbing like a broken heart,
Without protection from the chilling blight;
And tears of sadness from mine eyelids start.
Oh! there is music in thy woesome strain,
Come down, wild Rain!

Thou singest in the trees,
In sudden transport, 'mid the garden-bowers,
And to the Buds thy silver melodies,
Which hold their cups to catch thy luscious showers.
My Soul leaps out to meet thy vivid train.
Come down, wild Rain!

The time is sweet to me
When thou descendest from the great, calm Sky.
Let others hymn the grand, symphonious Sea;
The sleepy, golden Noon's faint, odorous sigh;
But I would shout across the earth and main,
"Come down, wild Rain!"

Then fainting flowers are clad
With rosying bloom; the lark's strong wing
Is sprent with jewels; earth and sky are glad;
God's vine is trodden; and each lovely thing
Is flushed with joy, and sings a merry strain.
Come down, wild Rain!

Silent as Love the lake reposes;
A grand, blue calm hangs brooding everywhere;

The birds hold concerts under roofs of roses;
And Nature worships God with praise and prayer:
The sick heart listens, and forgets its pain.
Come down, wild Rain!

THERE'S FOR ALL A FIELD OF LABOUR.

THERE 's for all a field of labour
In these earnest, stirring times;
And a Spirit-Voice should thunder
In the Poet's living rhymes.
Were the weapons of Earth's heroes
Perfumed breath and velvet hand?
No! they marched forth to the battle
Armour-clad and sternly grand.

What gives Man true grandeur, Brother?
Force of thought and strength of will.
Moral power no wrong can smother,
And no slander-venom kill.
Though his place on earth be lowly,
He 's a King without a Crown;
And he sways a sceptre holy
O'er an empire of renown.

There 's for all a field of labour
In the Universe to fill,
From a worm to an archangel,
From an atom to a hill;
And the World is one great workshop,
Where no idle wheels are made,
And Life is a noble picture,
With never a useless shade.

Courage, Brother, grow not weary
In the cause of truth and right;
Let the hope of victory cheer thee:
Fighting keeps our armour bright.
Never yet was Soldier's glory
Won on peaceful carpet fields;
And the gods of ancient story
Left no rust upon their shields.

God is with thee. Doubt Him never.
On thy darkness He will shine.
Trust His promises for ever:
They are heavenly bread and wine.
Spite of all Earth's taunting minions,
May good Spirits downward glide,—
Angel-guards, on snowy pinions,—
And be ever by thy side.

There 's for all a field of labour.
We have noble germs unblown;
Powers that high as stars may blossom,
And expand from zone to zone.
If the land is to be fruitful,
We must plough, and dig, and sow:
If our talents we would quicken,
We must think, and they will grow.

Friendship like a sunflower closes
When proud Fortune's gleams are o'er;
And the world with thorns not roses
Crowns its Saviours evermore.
Though no primrose-path thou treadest,
But a flinty, thorny road,
Thou shalt have the prayers thou needest,
And the kindest care of God.

There 's for all a field of labour;
In the Future's regal morn
Earth shall wear a crown of gladness,
Like a wreath without a thorn.
Do the angel-work of Duty,
Heeding not the echo, Fame:
Whether thou be crowned or crownless,
It will bless the World the same.

SONG OF THE FUTURE-TIME.

IT is coming, it is coming,
I behold it o'er the wave!
The glorious Ship of Progress,
It is freighted with the brave.
In it Freedom walks the billows;
Oh! hail it from the strand,
Every Mother, every Brother,
Every man with horny hand.
It cometh in its blessèd prime,
This old world's glorious Future-time.

Then every true and free man
Shall speak in kindly words,
Learn to use the file and hammer,
And forget the use of swords;
The Chivalry of Labour
In the sun shall sit and sing;
Whose brow is wet with honest sweat,
The world shall crown him King;
And every blossom on his tree
Shall grow intelligent and free.

The Poor shall never hunger
In a land where Plenty flows,
And the cheeks of Boy and Maiden
Shall be like the fresh red rose;
Song and dance the hearts shall thrill
Of Freemen on the green;
And Peace shall spread her leafy palm
Where War's footprints have been;
And youth shall grow to manhood's prime
To crown the glorious Future-time.

Glad homes shall stand like Edens
Where the ripening sunbeams fall,
And Woman's name shall sacred be
In cot and lordly hall;
Tears of pity back shall bring
The woe-worn and exiled,
And souls so new and beautiful
Shine in each ragged child;
Sweet odours of the better clime
Are wafted o'er the Future-time.

There's a mist upon the Morning;
But the Truth breaks burning through;
And the murky clouds are dying
In sunny beams and dew.

It has lit the hills already
With its blazing torch of gold;
And the valleys and the alleys
Shall be blest with joy untold.
It beaconeth the world sublime—
The glorious, hope-crowned Future-time.

NO CROSS, NO CROWN.

"THE watchword of my life, amid all its struggles, from youth upward, has ever been, 'No Cross, no Crown.'"—WILLIAM PENN.

'TWAS Eve, and in a lowly room
A Student sat, in sombre gloom,
Twirling his fingers in his hair,
Like one in reverie or despair.
Before him lay an open book;
Sadness was in his languid look;
And as he traced the pages o'er
Four golden words his Spirit bore,—
No Cross, no Crown!

Around, in death-like silence, stood
The forms of many great and good,—
Prophets and Martyrs crucified;
Stern Patriots, who for Freedom died;
And Poets, who died desolate,
Scanning the wondrous scroll of Fate;
While glory round their foreheads shone.
He read upon their lips of stone,—
No Cross, no Crown!

Hard was the strife to conquer lore,
For one so young and worldly poor.
His books were precious, though but few;
And deathless fire from Heaven he drew.
Heart-wearied oft, and overwrought,
He traced in throbbing lines his thought;
And 'mid his toil this seemed to be
The voice alone of Destiny,—
No Cross, no Crown!

Sometimes his noble Spirit turned
Towards Fame's pillar as it burned;
And oft he judged his efforts vain
To cross the burning sands of Pain.
He groaned in agonized distress;
Life's cup was dashed with bitterness;
And then he thought of those of old,
Who carved in brass those words of gold,—
No Cross, no Crown!

They fought the battle, bore the Cross,
That Truth might never suffer loss,
But, like the tempest-cradled flower,
Spring through the storm—the martyr's dower—
Souls that, while beaconing the free,
To lordly Wrong ne'er bent the knee;
But from their graves a Spirit came,
Uttering words of living flame,—
No Cross, no Crown!

His Soul sometimes would droop her wing,
When envious arrows sped the string;
But, like a trumpet's martial strains,
His Country's voice thrilled through his veins;
And, heedless of the Critic's ire,
His heart glowed with immortal fire;
And, like a man in earnest, he
Up Learning's hill climbed dauntlessly,
No Cross, no Crown!

While marching on he bravely sung;
To Music rare his Harp he strung;
To Love and Freedom, Truth and Right,
Justice and Mercy, gods of light!
Oh! cheering fell those golden words
Upon his worn heart's tender chords:
In death those words his Spirit bore,
And chants them still for evermore,—
No Cross, no Crown!

This be the motto of the brave,
And this the watchword of the slave;
The Statesman's, with the people's scorn;
The Poet's, with his garland-thorn.
Whoever seeks to win a name,
Whoever toils for Freedom's fame,
Whoever human tears would dry,
Let this for ever be his cry,—
No Cross, no Crown!

LITTLE RACHEL'S REVERIE.

THIS singularly dreamy and poetical child was ten years old when her mother died in giving birth to an infant, which survived her but a few hours only, and was laid with her in the same coffin. Little Rachel believes she is visited by her mother still, while "broad awake;" and on one occasion she seemed to sit so near her that she ran to kiss her, and began to weep because the apparition had dissolved.

OH! the day is very bright, Father, as lovely as the May,
And in the green woods merrily the happy Children play;
But wearily, Oh! wearily the long, glad day I sigh;
For they have all a Mother's love, but no Mother now have I.

There's Martha, led by Mother's hand through lanes where roses blow;
They gather Spring's blue violets and white daisies as they go;
And Mary's Mother smoothes her hair, till soft as silk it be:
Oh, Father! will my Mother ne'er come back again to me?

The crimson-scarfèd clouds float o'er the shoulders of the hill,
The tongues of streams and waterfalls sing their old music still,
The corn-sheaves toss their golden crowns like mimic kings at play;
But Mother's eyes are closed to them for ever and for aye.

Oh, I've lingered in the merry woods, where all was green and glad;
Where Nature dreamed to Music, and the flowers were glory-clad;

Where every hedge was snowed with buds, and hung with honey-bees;
But Mother then was gone, and I found no joy in these.

Oh, Father! never more can I forget each holy day,
When my Mother clasped my little hands, and taught me how to pray;
And when I kneel me by my bed, or by her empty chair,
My closed eyes gaze on Heaven, and I see my Mother there.

Oh, Father! do ye mind the day when here my Mother stood,
And planted this sweet rose-bush, which is summering into bud?
When the golden-fluted blackbird in the lilac branches sang,
Till the blossoms shook around it, and the garden-alleys rang?

Oh! the merry bells were ringing, and the Sabbath-day was calm,
And o'er the dim old forest came the grandly-pealing psalm;
Then my Mother wept, and kissed me: 'twas the Sabbath ere she died.
Does she hear the glorious music of the crowned and glorified?

Beneath the illumined heavens at even-tide we trod,
Reading the gorgeous language of the unclasped book of God.
By Ocean's moonlit margin crept up my feeble prayer;
For Mother taught me God could hear a Child's prayer everywhere.

'Twas Winter when she died, Father; snow-clouds were falling fast;
And as I lay with strained eyes, methought a Spirit passed,
In robe of white and gold, with wind-dishevelled hair,
Which shone like moonlight in my room. I saw my Mother there.

Oh! when you told me she was dead, I knew not what you meant,
Till I saw the stare of anguish in your calm, sad features blent.
I could not think her lifeless till I kissed her lips of clay;
A thrill like ice went through me; for, Oh! how cold were they!

There were snowdrops in her soft, white palms when she was laid below,
And an Infant on her bosom, like a rose-bud in the snow.
They lay enclasped in silver shroud; her arms around it wove.
Oh! it was like my Mother; for her heart was full of love.

Oh, Father! dash away those tears now raining from your eyes;
We shall meet her a fair Angel, clothed with glory in the skies.
You are kind unto your Darling, and you smile as Mother smiled;
But a Mother—Oh, a Mother!—is the best nurse of her Child.

Ah! I long again to lay my head upon my Mother's breast;
For, Oh! my weary, weary heart would there be hushed to rest.
Dear Father! if another day should come as dark as then,
We will all depart together, and ne'er come back again.

THE WORKMAN-POET.

THIS poem was suggested by reading the Life and Poetry of Gerald Massey, one of England's sweetest minstrels, in 1854. Since then he has, indeed, sung "The World's new Paradise-Song," in his sublime and magnificent epic, "A Tale of Eternity."

THE Workman-Poet he builds his nest
Among chimney-stacks for boughs,
In a narrow room, with no roses drest,
Amid mansions all in rows;
And a clamorous brood around him cling,
In his mate and birdies three.
Oh! how can the Workman-Poet sing
In a voice of melody?

At morn he goes forth, and toils till eve,
Some pecking his young to find,
'Mong flint-faced men, who daily deceive,
With their pockets golden-lined.
Their yellow images chink and ring,
For them at the feast of life.
Oh! how can the Workman-Poet sing,
And be heard amid the strife?

He glides over mountains, glens, and woods,
On moon-mottled steeds of dreams;
And culls fresh clusters of daisy-buds
By phantasied haunts and streams.
In his bondage-cage he lifts his wing,
A flutter, and then a tear.
Oh! how can the Workman-Poet sing
A music both rich and clear?

The Mother Bird needs new feathers soon,
She is in such moulting plight;
And the Young Ones sing, in a pleading tune,
For sustenance day and night.
Oh! these be sorrows his heart to wring;
For Song hath but frugal fare.
Oh! how can the Workman-Poet sing
In a nest so bleak and bare?

Yet angels and gods discourse through him,
In grand and eternal chimes:
Hearts that are sad, and eyes that are dim,
Grow brighter because of his rhymes.
Of Thought-Land he shall be the King,
And vanquish the troops of wrong;

And oh! the Workman-Poet shall sing
The World's new Paradise-Song.

Yes, the birds his nest that sing around
Are memories bright as May;
And the golden flowers in his dwelling found
Are fancies all fresh and gay.
Want never shall crush the joys that cling
Round his Harp half-strung, but dear.
And oh! the Workman-Poet shall sing,
And the World be glad to hear.

UNREALIZED ASPIRATIONS.

To Charles W. Tinckam, the compiler of "The Poets' Year."

'Tis happiness to have one warm, true Friend.
Whose pulse beats to our own; whose studious eye
Can read the Soul upon the changing brow;
When the strong fibres of two loving hearts
Are clasped together in the soil of Truth,
And blossom from the root like violets.
'Tis thus, my Friend, we through the meadows roam,
Discoursing of Ambition, Fame, and War,
Drinking Castalia from the brooks and springs,
With Poets soaring on seraphic wings.
I love a ramble in the Summer-time
By rivers stammering to the braggart Sea,
By hedges veined with honeysuckles, dells
And glens of frank primroses, which I cull,
And homeward carry for my cooing Child.
I feel the ravishment of conquering beauty;
Love lures me to her heaving bosom; Home
Throws round me many a golden link of joy,
When o'er the heart's dead springs of long ago
The snow-nursed aftermath of Friendship lingers.
I love the Night when crowned with starry buds,
And the long Evenings lay their soft, sweet palm
Upon my head gently as a Mother's hand;
And Winter wins from me admiring meed,
Which, like a Martyr, stands with face benign,
Pelted with snow, and patient as a god.
At length old Nature sorrows o'er the deed,
And places Spring's best garland on his brow.
The wild bird's nest forth-peeping from the moss,
The waterfall's old music in the glen,
Where grows the tasselled birch 'mid fairy ferns;
The green slope splashed with crimson pimpernels,
The robin on the boulder by the well,
Fill me with joyance and ecstatic tears.
For Woman I can feel a tender joy;
Music oft wins me with its melting strains;
And oft I think that Eden's fairest bowers
Were not more lovely than this Earth could show,
If Love were lord of all. Yet am I sad
Beside the banquet of the Universe,
Because my Spirit goes in quest of fruits,
Returns, and bringeth only withered leaves.

THE RETURN OF THE HEIR.

Sir Rupert's castle was orchard-zoned,
And girdled with smiling lands;
Each Summer showered songs, syren-toned,
And fruits from its leafy hands.
And Lady Jane he made his Bride,
And she was a vain ladye,
With an eye of scorn, and a heart of pride,
On Fashion's giddy sea.

And after years away had fled
Adown the stream of joy,
There grew in their sumptuous garden-bed
A rosebud of a Boy.
But the Infant's cry, as it blooming grew,
Ne'er broke on its Mother's rest,
And its little life was fed on dew
That flowed from another's breast.

The Babe-lord's nurse was a gentle dame,
Who nested him tenderly,
Keeping a-warm Love's foster-flame
Till into a youth grew he;
While his Mother passed the nursery door,
Like an empress, tall and grand,
And swept, in rustling silks, the floor,
But only kissed her hand.

And when she walked across the lawn,
Under the Beechen trees,
The grass that her small foot trod upon
Scented the wooing breeze.
Her thin rose-lips oft kissed the flowers,
And toyed with the Falcon wild,
But seldom the bud of her garden bowers—
Her beautiful, smiling Child.

Sir Rupert saw the princely blood
That mantled his Baby's brow—
His grand black eye that calmly glowed,
Like a thing that scorned to bow:
He looked with delight on his fearless Boy,
His coronet-bearing Heir,
But never dreamed, in his utmost joy,
What an eagle Soul was there.

A hundred Nobles lay at the root
Of his ancient Family,
And a ladye-born was the Mother-fruit,
And gay as a Summer Sea.
No colour an Artist's easel owns
Was rich as her leaping veins;
But one degree from the rank of thrones,
The idol of courtly trains.

'Twas a bright May morn—the blossoms flung
Their fragrance out on the wind,
And over the hills the Skylark sung,
With the Eagle a mile behind.
The stately forms of a Youth and Maid
Walked forth by the river's side,
Beneath the poplar's blossomy shade,
Where the nested linnets hide.

'Twas Percy, Sir Rupert's gallant son,
With the glowing, lightning eye,
To the gentle Maid who his heart had won,
Bidding a brief good-bye.

He heard the Battle-call afar,
The trumpet's glorious ring,
And panted to fling his life in War,
Or rise on its stormy wing.

Hie on! hie on! a whisper said,
As if dropped from above;
Hie on! hie on! and crown thy head
With a Maiden's holy love.
By the living rock 'mid the Battle stand,
And break its surge in slaughter,
Then, victory-garlanded, claim the hand
Of the noble's lovely Daughter.

Years into Eternity were exhaled,
Like dew-drops in the Sun;
The youth to a foreign field had sailed,
And glorious bays had won.
Sir Rupert heard, from over the Sea,
Of one of distinguished fame,
And wondered oft if it could be he
Who bore his ancient name.

They heard he was 'mong the harvest-dead,
Gathered the ripest sheaf,
And mournful drops the Father shed,
But his Mother's woe was brief.
Oh! had he been born of a grim She-wolf,
Its grief had been more wild;
With love she never could bridge the gulf
Between her Nurse and Child.

Sir Rupert slept in death's repose
Ere the night of age came down,
And his Widow looked like a sumptuous rose
Into fuller beauty blown.
Of her glorious queendom proud was she—
"These lands," said she, "I own;
And the Summer-birds on every tree
Make music for me alone."

'Twas the eve of another May-day,
Flower unto flower sang rhymes,
And each male-bloom had a lady gay,
In the sycamores and the limes.
The ghost-moths flitted from bower to bower,
Seeking their mates to charm,
And blossom to blossom, and flower to flower,
Were leaning with kisses warm.

The crescent Moon, Eve's coronet,
Seemed anchored like an ark;
And the moonlight trailed its silvery net
Through the midnight billows dark.
The birds, in the purply lilac-bush,
Slept in a cradle of dreams;
And over the world hung a dewy hush,
Bosomed in warm moonbeams.

The glorious Sun of that May-morn
Had smiled on a Bridal train;
In the Castle was heard the bugle-horn
When the Bells gave up the strain.
A feast was made, and guests came far
To pledge the twain in wine,
Nor went they home till the Vesper-Star
Had *lighted its holy shrine.*

But hearts there were, in another hall,
Who pledged in flowing bowls
The distant Heir, whose light footfall
Would yet be heard o'er the knolls;
A Gala be held, when the Bells would sound
A Bridegroom's younger charms,
And a Maiden-Bride would clasp him round
With soft woodbiny arms.

The stately Form of a cavalier
On a full-blood Charger sate—
Its hoofs on the grass fell soft and clear
As he rode to the Castle gate;
He tied his Steed to a chestnut bough,
On which he oft had swung,
And, lovelily laden with Flora's snow,
Its pendent branches hung.

The Bride and Bridegroom lay alone,
The Bride on the Bridegroom's breast;
But a voice was heard of a wild, strange tone,
And a phantom crossed their rest.
"Awake, sweet Love," said the Bridegroom, low,
Kissing her eyelids white,
"I hear a swan-soft music flow
Across the waste of night."

"'Tis but," said she, "the falling leaf
Whirled down on the dappled sward;
Sleep, handsome Knight—no midnight thief
Can enter my Castle yard."
He kissed her lips of ruby flame,
Of beauty's realm the king;
But still he heard a voice the same
Out in the darkness ring.

The Moon shone through the casement, bright
As the glow-worm's elfin spark;
And though a stranger came by night,
Unheard was the Watch-dog's bark.
Then to the window went Lady Jane,
And looked adown the glade,
Dreaming it was some knightly swain
With a Bridal serenade.

The Soldier he doffed his cap of plumes,
And bowed his graceful head,
And gazing up to those Bridal-rooms,
"Mother, thy Son!" he said.
"Begone!" she cried, "who me thus braves,
And startles my sleeping eyes?
Away, or I will call my slaves
To strip thee of thy guise."

That well-known voice, *the slaves* they heard:
Each said to each, "'Tis he—
He whom we thought in War interred,
Or drowned in the great Sea."
"Oh! Mother," the Soldier son replied,
"I came from the War this morn,
And many a sword-scar bear with pride,
But keener is thy scorn."

He turnéd to retrace his track;
The Dog crawled to his feet—
He gently stroked its glossy back,
It leapt his smile to greet.

The sole companion of the Boy
  Had been that worthy brute—
It recognised the Man with joy,
  Although its tongue was mute.

"My Friend," said he, "thou knowest me well,
  Leaping about me wild,
Kissing my hand, thy love to tell;
  While she—she spurns her Child.
She'll come to herself ere another Moon
  Smiles o'er the rich estate;
I'll feed thee yet with a silver spoon,
  Thy food on a golden plate."

At Morn he hied to the rustic Cot
  By bowery hedge-rows green,
Where dwelt his Nurse, who ne'er forgot
  Her Foster-Child, I ween.
She saw him coming, and gaily rose
  To meet him, with joy attuned;
To his manly breast he clasped her close,
  And in his arms she swooned.

Thence passing along through fields of rye,
  Which fringed an emerald grove,
Where a stately Hall stood towering high,
  He met his own true Love.
The braids on her brow glanced up and down
  Where a crowd of ringlets reeled;
With a kiss he came her lips to crown—
  Like rose-leaves soft they yield.

Witnessed by one rose-tree full blown,
  They vowed to be twain in one
Ere thrice in his May-car round the zone
  Had travelled the golden Sun.
Then the Birds sang up in the blue Lift,
  Sang in their joyance soft,
And clouds dropped myrrh and incense-gift
  O'er lambs that dappled the croft.

Percy made clear his rightful claim
  The rich estates to own,
And another Bride and Bridegroom came
  To the Castle's beds of down.
His Mother remained their joy to share,
  With ill-concealed pretence;
He went abroad who the Widow fair
  Had wedded for opulence.

The Bells pealed forth from the Minster-tower,
  Ringing the Bridal in—
The Bees were alight on each honied flower—
  The Birds made merry din.
A coronet flashed on the Bridegroom's breast,
  A wreath on the Bride's fair brow,
And never was seen a marriage so blest,
  A pageant so grand, I trow.

DOMESTIC AFFECTION.

THE Skylark singeth in sun and cloud,
  And the Night at the East-gate dies,
And the day is born in the lap of Morn,
  And the rose-bloom fills the skies;
And ever the day succeeds the night,
  And the night succeeds the day;
And sunshine, after storm and rain,
  Will crown our lot for aye,
                Sweet Wife.

Not oft, 'mid Spring's bright goldenness,
  And Summer's soft-nested bowers,
Is Life's lot cast; but in the shade,
  'Mid Winter's chilling showers.
The dark worm dwells wherever Life
  Hath flowered with Love and Joy;
But, Oh! there is a bliss divine
  In Duty's sweet employ,
                Sweet Wife.

Yesterday's dead, and To-morrow is far
  Away in the East, with the dawn;
To-day alone we can call our own,
  And the Present will soon be gone.
While the meadows of heaven are crowned
    with stars,
  And the meadows of earth with flowers,
There 's a merry time for the hearts of all,
  And a world of love for ours,
                Sweet Wife.

Oh! the Sun must rise, and the Sun must set;
  But Love need never be cold.
Oh! what would Life without Love be worth,
  With all its dreams of Gold?
Bright hopes go down in the shallow Town,
  Where the stony-hearted be;
At Evening's close I find repose
  In the love of my Child and thee,
                Sweet Wife.

THE GODS ARE WITH THE BRAVE.

THE gods are with the Brave, never fear;
He who falters is a Slave all the year;
If you sow the future-seed, with right good
    and earnest deed,
The Harvest-Time indeed shall appear.

The gods are with the Brave, smiting Wrong;
It is swimming 'gainst the wave maketh strong;
Walk you on the upward track, with the shadow
    at your back;
And, in spite of storm and wrack, move along.

The gods are with the Brave; they who trail
Their heart's love in the grave ever fail.
Up, and to Battle bear, your flag-staff in the air;
On the maelstrom of Despair crowd all sail.

The gods are with the Brave. Strike the blow!
The craven and the knave, let them go;
Dash boldly to the breach; snatch the guerdon
    in your reach;
And let kindness in your speech ever flow.

The gods are with the Brave everywhere,
To guard them and to save them from the snare;
If you feel a glorious thought, lest the truth
    should come to nought,
Speak it boldly as you ought,—God is there!

HYMN OF LOVE.

LOVE tunes the harps of Angels
In their happy jubilee:
What would Life and Beauty
Without its sunshine be?
When the Skylark singeth,
Love lifts its merry wings;
The heart is full of music
When Love moves its silver strings.

Tell me the Flower that bloweth,
Wintering through the snow;
Show me the Lamp that burneth
In Life's dumb night of woe;
What is that precious manna
Heaven on the heart doth shed?
'Tis fire-tried Love, which liveth
When all beside is dead.

There is a Love that lingers
When Friends their farewell take;
It is the Love that suffers
For the Belovéd's sake;
It is the bloomy Spring-time,
When hearts are never cold;
It is the holy Love-prime,
When hearts are never old.

GREY LOCKS.

OH! sacred be those thin grey locks,
Those dear grey locks, Old Friend, of thine!
They whiten like the full, ripe shocks
Of corn, that for the harvest shine—
Those thin grey locks, those dear grey locks,
Those full, ripe shocks, Old Friend, of thine.

They tell of Life's drear frost and snow,
Its greatness, wisdom, love benign;
Of thoughts and deeds nursed long ago,
Eloquent are those locks of thine,
Those thin grey locks, those dear grey locks,
Those eloquent locks, Old Friend, of thine.

Oh! those soft locks of silvery hue
Like a Saint's glory round thee shine;
God's smile on Age to virtue true
Are those grey locks, Old Friend, of thine,
Those soft grey locks, those silvery locks,
Those glorious locks, Old Friend, of thine.

Oh! hallowed be those thin grey locks,
Those reverend locks, Old Friend, of thine;
For Heaven shall garner those ripe shocks,
And rays celestial round them shine!
Those thin grey locks, those dear grey locks,
Those full, ripe shocks, Old Friend, of thine.

THE GIRL AND THE BEE.

A LITTLE, lovely Girl,
With ringing laughter, through the meadow flew;
And as she dashed aside each sunny curl,
She danced upon the dew.

The overladen flowers,
With silver rims, looked up, and sweetly smiled,
Like human faces, in the dewy showers,
And seemed to love the Child.

Earth was a-smile with June;
In tree and bush the Birds held jubilee;
And past the Girl flew, 'mid the rays of noon,
A golden-belted Bee.

She tossed her hat aside,
And off she bounded, like a fresh, young fawn,
To catch the Bee in all its gilded pride,
And call the gem her own.

When on a flower it lit,
Her white straw hat upon the Bee she flung;
But, scarcely had her finger been on it,
Ere that sweet Girl was stung.

Beware, beware of show!
The Wine that sparkles in the glass, pursued,
To unsuspecting youth may prove a foe,
And end, perchance, in blood.

LOVE AND FAITH.

I MUST leave thee, Love of mine,
For a time, dear, for a time;
But the Night will homeward bring
My worn heart, Love, ere its chime.
Oh! the Bee's love for the hive
Wings it o'er the flowery lea;
Makes the bright Bird leave its nest
For the Sea, Love, for the Sea.

When the Stars are at their mass
In the sky, dear, in the sky,
I look on a brighter Heaven
In thine eye, Love, in thine eye.
Oh! I bliss me on thy breast;
Like a wearied child in Spring,
Raining kisses on thy brow,
Like a King, Love, like a King.

LADY, SPARE A JEWEL.

LADY, spare a Jewel! Want is knocking at thy door!
The chilling Frost creeps crisping down the hoary blowing space;
Little Babes are shivering through this aching Winter-time.
Oh Lady! spare a Jewel, but one Jewel, for the Poor,
To hush the whining hounds of Famine, Death, and Crime,
And light with heavenly ray Humanity's sad face.
What! not one Jewel, Lady, this aching Winter-time,
While chilling Frost creeps crisping down the hoary, blowing space,
To blast the three estates of Famine, Death, and Crime,

And light with heavenly ray the faces of the Poor?
Spare thy Jewels, haughty Lady! Death is knocking at thy door;
And thou canst not close it now in his grim and ghastly face.

'TIS LIKE A DREAM.

OH! mournful words of the worn Spirit sighing,
Like a poor, wearied bird repining sore;
Of hearts where Love's lone, plumeless dove is dying;
Of music and soft voices heard no more.
'Tis like a Dream.

Ah! those weak words a world of thought compress
Of Pride, Power, Fashion, and Ambition's flame;
Of golden moments lost, and happiness,
And all the hollow husks of Wealth and Fame.
'Tis like a Dream.

Of trusting hearts, which sad experience seres;
Of grief-embalméd graves and silver shrouds;
Of hopes that fell in showers of bitter tears,
Like gorgeous palaces of rocking clouds.
'Tis like a Dream.

They tell of angels visiting the hearth,
Gladdening us with smiles awhile, then gone;
Of Friendship, rarest jewel of the earth!
Losing its lustre when the night came on.
'Tis like a Dream.

Of precious promises, too frail to trust;
Of quicksands we have taken for the rock;
Of pearls we dashed into the careless dust,
In mad Despair, ere Reason stayed the shock.
'Tis like a Dream.

The bubbles we pursued till undeceived;
The baubles that weighed down the soaring soul;
The false and fickle vows we have believed—
Ah, these were Life's rich heritage and goal;
'Tis like a Dream.

Go by, deceitful World! The time shall come
When all thy sweet delusions shall be o'er.
Thou glorious Dream! evanish to thy tomb;
For thou canst charm this wearied heart no more.
'Tis like a Dream.

THE MAGDALENE'S RETURN HOME.

DUSKY and bronze the Sunset
Glimmered on City spires,
Pleasant and pure the sunshine
Girdled the country shires;
The vagrant gale came laden
Just like an Angel's wing,
From the blossomed woodland Edens
With the incense-kiss of Spring;
And the dews came down at eventide,
Like pearls from the wreath of a jewelled Bride.

Despised by all, though fallen,
Followed by Want and Woe,
As hounds a-thirst and ravenous
Follow the stricken roe,
In a desolate City chamber,
A lovely Girl reclined;
Her braidless, tangled tresses,
Strown on the evening wind.
She slept! and her Soul went forth to cull
The flowers of a Dream-world wonderful!

Touched by the wand of Prospero,
Soft as the white moonbeam,
The delicate wings of Ariel
Wafted the Outcast's Dream
Far from the sickly City,
Beyond the swarming Town,
To the quiet, rustic Village,
With its shining, starry crown.
As the Vision sped on its fiery wing,
It seemed like a strange transfigured thing.

Home! Life's beautiful haven,
Whither all bosoms yearn,
As the prairie-flowers magnetic
Their petals northward turn;
Seen by the Soldier sleeping,
Wrapt in his mantle's fold,
The Captive lone in his dungeon,
The Slave from his country sold.
Home! round which love's tendrils curl,
Rose on the Dream of the fallen Girl.

The flower-fringed steep she climbeth
Again as in Life's May-day,
Ere from its height she stumbled
In darkness, and lost her way;
Ere, clad in a robe of brightness,
Appeared a Form, which said,
"Beautiful, wandering Maiden,
This is thy path," and led
To a fairy realm—a joyous scene,
Where Beauty was throned the worshipped Queen!

In the rosy bowers of Pleasure
She quaffed the sparkling bowl,
Dissolving in Circe's chalice
The joy-pearl of her Soul!
Then all the flowery landscapes
Fiery and black became,
And every blade of verdure
Flashed like a sword of flame;
And she was forth in the City driven
An Outcast both of Earth and Heaven!

She saw her Girlhood's graces
Into the foreground start,
When beauty, and truth, and virtue
Nestled like doves in her heart.
Like a dewy, bright, bud-angel
Her life unfolded then,

Her innocence all unblighted
By kisses of brutal men;
Ere Passion's blossom its poison shed
On the lily-wreath which bound her head.

She had worn the Village garland—
The May-queen 'mong her peers;
'Twas changed for a crown of curses—
A sceptre tipped with tears;
She had heard her Father's blessing,
Listed her Mother's prayer—
Ribaldry now and riot
Polluted the midnight air;
And she had bartered her Village fame
For the Harlot's sorrow, and sin, and shame.

She meeteth her Soul's betrayer,
Claspeth his neck in tears,
He flings her off like a viper,
Spurns her delicate years.
Seducer, and cheat, and harpy,
His friends still on him smile,
For he is a man of fortune,
And she is a Harlot vile.
Ah, ah, he writhes in Agony's chains,
As life dribbles out of his burning veins.

Now Spectres round her hover,
Saluting her one by one,
While shriek the lips of the Outcast—
"Ye faces of sorrow, begone!
'Tis thou! 'tis thou! my Father,
With silver-frosted hair;
I know thee, my Angel-Mother,
With face so worn and fair!
Why do ye come with smiling spell?
Is it to scoop me a deeper Hell?"

What maketh her bosom shudder?
Why heaveth her tortured breast?
The weary heart of the Fallen
Is never an halcyon nest!
She seeth her Childhood's dwelling,
Walks with her Brother brave,
She claspeth her virtuous Sister,
And weeps by her Mother's grave;
She tosses her frenzied arms on high,
Remorse like a demon watching by.

That Morn she rose from slumber
With a broken heart and bowed,
Homeward she bent her footsteps
Out of the City's crowd;
Dishevelled, and faint, and weary,
She reached the country shire,
Entered the Home of her Childhood,
Welcomed by Mother and Sire,
And the Village Maidens gathered round
In prayer and praise, for the lost was found.

When years like hours of Eden
Had fled, her Spirit rode
From the world of sin and sorrow
To the perfect groves of God.
In the garden-bowers of Heaven
She walks with Seraphs bright,
Through rainbow-roofed halls of jasper,
In raiment of shining white;
And sister Angels sweep Harps of gold
O'er the lamb returned to the Shepherd's fold.

THE LIGHTHOUSE AND THE PRESS.

"His heart was in his work, and the heart
Giveth grace unto every Art."—LONGFELLOW.

THE Lighthouse stands upon the rock
In beauty, strength, and might;
'Tis like a Pillar of Cloud by day
And a Pillar of Fire by night!
O'er stormy seas its Lamp of Light
Reflects a cheerful glow,
And from its lofty brow a flame
Like a burning Rose doth blow.
For this is a perilous Reef, I ween,
And danger lurketh around:
The wrecked have clung to its slippery edge
And sobbed and bubbled and drowned!
And over their green sea-graves
The storm-chased surges trod,
And none beheld their dying gasp
But the great calm eye of God!

One Night a Storm arose:
Horsed on a fiery wing,
The lightning flashed like foemen's swords,
'Mid thunders volleying;
The churlish, chill sea-wind
Shrieked to the breakers' wail:
Stars hid the murky clouds behind
With haggard looks and pale;
As a gaunt, starving wolf
Steals on the fold with doom,
Crept o'er each gully, crag, and gulf
A black, terrific gloom!

Spurned with fierce, tremendous shocks,
The waves her bulwarks raking,
A Ship lay panting 'mong the rocks—
Just like a strong heart breaking.
Down sank her fearless Crew,
Entombed in the briny water;
And the Winds their requiem blew,
And the Storm wept at their slaughter.
When the Moon looked from her steep
The tempest ceased to beat,
And the Sea lay down to sleep
Like a tiger at her feet.

Shines now the Lighthouse! Throned
O'er waves like Alps of snow;
And on the perilous Reef the Lamp
Like a red Flame-Rose doth blow!
Its pyramidal shape ascends
Strong as a fortress wall
Amid the wild, tumultuous seas,
With the grand Sky over all.
The thunders growl, the lightnings flash,
Battalions of billows dash,
But there it stands! They cannot stir
The granite-moulded Jupiter!

How it was built and what befel
With wonder and awe the Mariners tell.
There is not a home in that seaside town
But mourns some Life on that Reef that went down.
At length issued forth the Nation's command
That deep in the rock the Lighthouse should stand.

Bold men, be steady! the blocks are ready,
Launch the Boats with a cheer and a shout—

Hurrah! brave hearts, the tide is out!
Scoop out the mud from the oozy flood,
Then down with the block on the solid rock,
Then caulk and tighten, then weld and brighten.
Then, Jove, thy thunders crash,
Drive, drive, rain, hail, and snow!
Then dash, old Neptune, dash!
And blow, Boreas, blow!

But scarcely the rock was wedged and scooped
Ere the tide returned, and the billows dashed,
And o'er the dismantled frame-work crashed,
With revel and rattle, retreat and battle,
Like an army besieging a town—
Piecemeal crumbling down,
'Mid the loud artillery's sound;
And when the last rushing onslaught swooped
A weltering havoc yawned around.
On its Samsonian shoulders
It lifted the blocks and boulders
With never a pause;
And into the foaming eddy cast
Boat and anchor, scaffold and mast,
Down chasms like lion's jaws.
With a shout and a roar like a weed it tore
The strong foundation-stone away,
And tossed the prize to the Ocean grey.
As the monster passed, the men, aghast,
Looked on as if they beheld a ghost,
But said not a word—for their toil was lost!
The Sun rose high cloud-gulfs among,
The sea-gull skimmed the waves along,
The Eastern-sky in glory shone,
And Neptune smiled from his emerald throne.
Be ready, brave men! to the work again!
We will conquer the waves in their granite caves!
To the Boats! to the Boats!
Ply the oars! ply the oars!
Brawny the arms of the workmen brave,
Sturdy the hearts of those on the wave,
Whose terrible roars
In hurricane notes
May chant a wild Dirge o'er their wreathless grave!

They are moored by the rock in spite of the shock
Of the surges, which trample on corses,
That whiten and welter and rattle,
Like a charging battalion of horses
Plunging through columns in battle:
Then the Conscience-stricken Main
Gave up his mangled slain.

Smitten and tossed by the wrath of the surge
In the Sea's black chasms the Boats submerge!
The Deep it was troubled; it boiled and it bubbled
And frothed like a brute in a chain:
The Flotilla of Toil 'mid the mad turmoil
Was swamped in the vortex and seen not again!
Never despair, but hope and trust!
To despair is to sulk with the God of the just.
The Sea is the slave of the bold and the brave.
Brave men, brave men;
Out with your Boats!
To the work again!
'Tis the triumph of Love
And Mercy divine;
Your laurels shall twine,
Your names shall be blest, if successful ye prove.

The sudden Sun swooped through the sombre grey air,
Like a glorious Bird with wings outspread;
The haggard Night slunk like an owl to its lair,
Appalled by the splendour it shed.
There was glory above, there was gladness below,
And a truce was made between Earth and Sky;
For high o'er the Ocean's ebb and flow
The Lighthouse smiled like an angel's eye.
The stones were cast and bolted fast
In the granite ribs of the massive rock,
Layer on layer and block on block,
And the briny monster was conquered at last!
The grand Colossus rose
With a form of perfect mould,
And the burning Rose in the Lighthouse blows
To cheer the Mariners bold.

Thus Freedom was reared
'Mid a Red Sea of blood,
And Despots trembled and feared
When she in her glory stood.
Thus Truth rose sublime
O'er Ruin and Strife,
The wonder of Time
And the beauty of Life.
The reward of the judgment of Thought
Was the judgment of flame;
Good men's crowns of thorns were wrought,
And their death was a death of shame.
Now the billows may dash
And the surges may roar,
The lightnings may flash,
But their terror is o'er;
For illumined by Sages,
The wide world to bless,
The Lighthouse of Ages
Stands proudly—the Press.

COME, KISS THE GOBLET.

COME, kiss the Goblet's sparkling ring,
Those starry eyes it will not dim;
This is the nectar of the Spring,
No scorpions twine around its brim;
It will not break Love's holy trust,
Cut Hope's clasped tendrils till they die,
Dash God's fair image to the dust,
Or darken the immortal eye.

Come, kiss the Goblet's beaded brim:
Here we pledge our hearts to Love,

Which tunes the harps of Seraphim—
In Jubilees of Song above.
There is no music in the heart
Till Love hath touched its vocal strings;
Then Heaven into the Soul doth start,
And Life soars up with angels' wings.

Come, kiss the Goblet's crystal flood
To Friendship, still unchanged by years.
Oh! drink to all the Great and Good,
Whose laurels are unstained by tears.
Then drink to Love, the holy flower
That bloometh through the Winter's frost;
That welcomes either sun or shower,
And stronger grows when tried the most.

Come, kiss the Goblet's silver dew
To Woman, Nature's fairest crown,
Beneath whose smile those Heroes grew,
Whose deeds have won the world's renown.
Where is the Soul that never thrilled
Beneath her sweet bewitching spell?
Oh, may her heart with Love be filled,
And Angels of her virtues tell!

Come, kiss the Goblet's pearly foam
To those who wield the Press and Pen,
To crown with Joy the Poor Man's Home,
Till Paradise shall bloom again;
To all by honest Toil who live,
And spurn the gold by evil earned;
And those who of their riches give,
That erring Souls be heavenward turned.

Come, kiss the Goblet's sacred ring
To Merit, moving earth to rise;
To Genius, with the soaring wing;
To Virtue with the tearful eyes.
Come, kiss the Goblet to the Brave;
To Freedom and to Fatherland;
To those on earth—those in the grave;
And pass it on from land to land.

THE VISION OF COLUMBUS.

Morn, like a beauteous cherub,
Hung o'er the waveless Main,
Gilding the port of Palos,
Down on the shores of Spain;
Buoyantly on the Ocean,
Glittering caravels three;
Danced ere they bore Columbus
O'er an unvoyaged Sea;
And many bright eyes did swim in tears
When anchors were heaved 'mid thrilling cheers.

Destinies then of empires
In the balance trembling hung,
Around the Soul of Columbus
The myths of ages sung;
Unheeded were Ocean's terrors,
Mutinies, storms, and graves;
Above him a sky of tempests
Below him a world of waves;
And prayers ascended to the skies,
That Heaven *would bless his* enterprise.

His own was a tiny Vessel,
A span from stern to prow,
A sea-shell to the leviathans
Which breast the waters now.
Over his ample shoulders
His silvery honours fell,
His Soul to his noble figure
Lent grandeur's lofty spell.
The sails were unfurled from each bending mast,
And the little Fleet dashed away at last.

That was the hour of triumph
To the glorious Genoese,
But mutiny 'gan to mutter
Of murder on the seas.
"Put back!" said pilot and helmsman,
And crew, in a whispered tone;
"Why should we dare the peril
Of death 'neath the burning zone?
"Put back! put back!" the Cravens cried,
But the Fleet held on in scornful pride.

"Thither our pathway lieth,"
The illustrious Chieftain said;
"The West is the world's wealth-garden—
To find it our sails are spread;
Its cities have roof-trees golden,
In jewels the people shine;
The Women are lovely and stately,
And rich grapes load the vine."
And Hope illumined the crew's distress,
Like an Oasis in a wilderness.

As they sung their evening Vesper,
Columbus in sleep reclined,
Came over his Soul a Vision
Like fragrance on the wind:
He walked in Genoa's city,
He nursed his dream of joy,
He begged of Franciscan friars
Bread for his famished Boy;
And kings who spurned, and friends who cheered,
Wrought on his Spirit's woof appeared.

He saw o'er the Ocean shining
A scene of Elysian bowers;
Robed in a rainbow of glory,
Grew palm-trees, fruits, and flowers.
The birds with brilliant plumage
O'er crystal fountains sang,
And redolent with their music
The groves and gardens rang.
Oh! 'twas the land of sparkling streams
Which gilded his Boyhood's dazzling dreams.

A beautiful Form and graceful
Rose up on the Dreamer's sight;
'Twas the Genius of the Island,
In glittering robes bedight.
Like a seer of Truth Eternal,
He pointed along the strand
Where thundered the broad Atlantic,
The bulwark of the land,
Dotted with summering islands green,
Like sleeping swans in a fairy scene.

Then glimpses of noble people
His visual orbs did fill,

Inhabiting sunniest regions
By river and vale and hill;
Taking their pastoral pleasure,
The loitering lovers strayed,
And down by the calm sea-margin
Frolicsome children played;
To glassy brooks brown Fishers came,
Where gold flashed up like gems of flame.

Sudden, as by enchantment,
Ships swept by stately halls,
And surges of people jostled
'Gainst beaches of city walls;
Letters and Arts and Science,
Kindled by kingdoms afar,
Beamed over the Western empire,
Like sun and moon and star;
And millions found asylum there
From want and wrong and despot's snare.

The Morning dawned in splendour,
Dispelling the glorious dream
Which lighted within his Spirit
The grand prophetic gleam.
While the crew slept in their hammocks,
With turbulent visions tost,
He paced the deck of his Vessel,
And looked for the distant coast;
And as the beams on the waters lay,
A fragment rolled on the sparkling spray.

Nearer it came and nearer,
And struck on his Vessel's prow,
And up from the crested billows
He lifted a leafy bough—
He hugged it to his bosom,
As it were a dove returned
To tell of a grief subsided,
A rainbow of hope discerned.
The New World smiled o'er the purple tide;
"It is the Land of the West," he cried.

Oh! how his Soul had revelled
To see his vision unfurled;
He died ere he knew the splendour
He girdled about the world.
Honour to Queen Isabella—
May history shrine her name!
Glory to brave Columbus,
The heir of immortal fame!
Let kings and queens a lesson learn,
And never their meanest subject spurn.

Courage! O Seer of Freedom!
Patience! O Martyr-Soul!
The Boat may defy the billows
Which faces them as they roll.
Heed not the clamours of Doubters,
The mutinous voices of foes,
The Truth is a branch of verdure,
And Freedom's Tree still grows.
Hearken alone to the Spirit-chime,
And ye shall be blest through unborn Time.

THE BURNING SHIP.

WHAT a gallant, glorious thing,
On the wave's crest rocking fearless,
Is the Ship with snowy wing,
Pulsating, and proud, and peerless.
There 's might in her graceful form;
Anchored calm or 'mid commotion,
In the sunshine or the storm,
She 's the Daughter of the Ocean.

Like a wild Bird of the Sea
Sailed that bark with storms to battle;
To the gales that carolled free
Did her canvas-pinions rattle.
When she left her harbour-nest,
Her fine bows were arching stately;
And the "Golden Eagle's" breast
Throbbed upon the waves elately.

His beautiful buoyant Bride,
The greybeard Ocean had crowned her;
With her fair limbs on the tide,
And his dimpled arms around her.
She made the billows her slaves,
Like a conqueror advancing
In a car of rolling waves,
With silver-maned foam-steeds prancing.

The Sun, from his western bow,
Shot saffron-tipped arrows gleaming,
And a flashing roseate glow
O'er the water-world was streaming.
Behind her, a Shadow-bark
Close in her wake was racing,
And a ghostly Image stark
Stood at the helm grimacing.

In the Sunset's burning glare
Cloud-spirits about were flitting,
While that Skeleton, white and bare,
At the swinging helm was sitting.
Though the storm-blast whistled shrill,
The sails all to ribbons hurling,
That wonderful Shape stood still,
Not a stitch of canvas furling.

A sable and scarlet Form
Moved over Day's dying glory;
'Twas the Demon that shakes the storm
O'er the heads of mariners hoary.
Thunders rolled, cannonading
The bark on the billows' verges;
And like an armed host invading
A citadel roared the surges.

Ah! pitiless blew the blast,
In the ear of Midnight shrieking;
And the birds clung to the mast,
'Mid cordage and canvas creaking;
And the boldest mariner
Stood trembling on watch with wonder
But the Ghost-Ship, like a star,
Rode calm 'mid lightning and thunder.

Hushfully, as if in fright,
The Ship flew, Heaven protect her!

A cry rang, "What of the night!
  Grim Watchman, mute as a spectre?"
"The sky 's a black hearse with plumes,"
  He replied. "The hurricane's howling,
A man has gone to the tombs,
  On his skull a Bird sits scowling."

Then, touched by the lightning's spark,
  The vessel was wreathed in blazes,
Along the wall of the dark
  Wide-flickered its awful mazes.
Still comet-like sped the Ship
  On her fiery path liquescent;
And the sibylline Moon did dip
  In eclipse her shining crescent.

Weaving the tempest a wreath
  The sparks were in showers descending;
Agony pleaded with Death,
  And curses with prayers were blending.
Flames scoriac-footed leapt
  From sail to mast without pity,
And over her bulwarks swept
  Like lava over a city.

And many their heads at last
  Laid down on those burning pillows,
While the "Golden Eagle" cast
  Her plumage over the billows;
And the signal-gun in vain
  Boomed 'mid the vessel's crashes:
The wreckers were Storm and Rain,
  Their torches the Lightning's flashes.

Oh, horror! to pray and groan
  In a ship when storms have swept her,
And the Fire-Fiend rears his throne,
  Far-flashing his flaming sceptre;
When like a coffin she hangs
  Between two vast wildernesses;
And our comrades feel the pangs
  Of Death's pitiless hot caresses.

"A-hoy!" shrieked the crew. "A sail!"
  To the sinking wreck 'twas riding,
The helmsman was still and pale:
  It was Death that Weird-Ship guiding.
Yes, the hour of hope was passed,
  Their grave will never be vernal;
The haven is gained at last,
  In the Land of the Eternal.

THE MOUNTAIN MAIDEN.

SHE was but a Child with a glossy load
  Of ringlets like golden rain,
As fair a thing as the hand of God
  E'er fashioned, and free from stain;
Her heart was blithe as the lamb that plays
  With shadows along the down;
And her brow was wreathed with sparkling rays
  Like a *Saint's immortal* crown;
Right regally robed in garments white,
  Like an Angel on Sabbath-morn,
Each flow and fold with grace bedight,
  She seemed of the Eden-born.
She did not braid with gems her hair,
  So goldenly flowing down;
What need of Earth's poor jewels where
  Heaven wreathed so rich a crown?

Her smile was sunshine everywhere—
  O! a wildling flower was she—
O'er Age's snow to blossom fair,
  And a stalwart stem was he.
Her Father's heart was a stately tower,
  Round which her life-vine twined,
As over a ruin the climbing Flower
  With sweetness loads the wind.

Her elf-like footstep over the floor
  Made music's welcomest tone;
The Robin would eat from her garnered store,
  Leaving his mossy stone.
And many a youth her Cot would pass
  And carve on the trees her name,
While she lay hid like a bud in grass,
  Known but by her fragrant fame.

But never she left her Father's side
  Till ebbed her music-breath,
For she was espoused to one dark-eyed,
  A bridegroom whose name was Death;
And Maidens fair from the mountain-pass
  Followed the Bridal train,
And scattered flowers o'er the Village Lass
  Whom Death to his breast had ta'en.

In the green Churchyard of a little glen,
  Where sobbing streamlets flow,
She sleeps by her Mother's side again,
  And over them blossoms blow;
But whether He makes a floweret bloom,
  Or withers it into dust,
The will of God, in our joy or gloom,
  Is ever both wise and just.

Each Sabbath-day her Father wends
  To Church, dim-veiled with age;
And he misses now the best of friends
  Who found for him the page.
She joins no more in the chanting Choir
  Her voice like a linnet's song,
And when the white-robed Maids retire
  She is not amid the throng.

But Sorrow is now his cherished Child,
  And, O! it is very dear;
He nurses it softly—anguish-wild—
  And feedeth it tear by tear.
It giveth the wintry Robin bread,
  It trimmeth the woodbine fair,
It kneels to pray by her little bed,
  And sits in his Darling's chair.

Two lowly graves lie side by side,
  Two names on one headstone,
And an image leans o'er his vanished pride,
  Keeping his vigil alone—

To see the forms of his buried twain
  Live in the first blue flower,
Giving themselves to his lips again
  For his kisses hour by hour.

ON LEAVING HOME.

'Tis Evening, with its holy calm;
The groves with crimson thrill and flush;
The resonant Ocean chants his psalm;
And, glittering o'er the firmament,
Flutters the Sunset's golden tent.
The Skies their dewy nectar crush
Into the chalices of flowers,
Like revellers in ladies' bowers;
And one by one, all silently,
Lights glimmer o'er the moonlit Sea,
And God burns in the starry bush.

The Day's rich plumage now is folden,
Like a wing-wearied bird's;
The clouds furl off so blue and golden;
A soothing softness melts the air;
And, faltering like a lover's words,
The holy stars shine everywhere.
So warm and fresh the South-wind comes,
'Tis like the kiss of one I love;
Or like the flight of the wild dove,
Whose wings are odorous with blooms.

How peaceful is the hour of Even,
When bendeth the blue sky above,
Like a sainted Mother's love,
Who smileth down in stars from Heaven!

The air, with fragrance surfeited,
Slumbereth so sweet and stilly,
It would not wake the rose-bud red
With its faint breath, or stir the lily.

My little Boat is pushed from shore;
The chiming oars ring in the sea;
I think of Friends, where'er they be:
For many will see my face no more.

While all Youth's precious instincts bud,
And Love comes like a golden flood,
This stern campaign of toil and strife
Consumes the blooming Flower of Life.
Upon his couch in the gorgeous West
Day like a King is dying;
His robe of state is round his breast;
His bosom throbs with wild unrest;
While orisons of wind and sea
Chant *Miserere Domine*
To rocks and cliffs replying.

Like Cherubim, the hills upraise
Their mighty arms and dusky wings,
Crowned by the stars' eternal rings,
In attitude of prayer and praise;
The shining feet of granite rocks,
Where wave the dark pines' sombre locks,
The Ocean bathes, like Magdalene,
The Holy Martyrs of the Cross;
Anoints them with his billows green;
And wipes them with the tangled moss.

WHAT IS POETRY ?

Poetry is Love,
Of pain and sorrow born;
Like Christ's star-haloed crown above,
It blossometh from thorn.
But for each pang a palm is given,
And every sigh wafts souls to Heaven!

Poetry is Truth,
Its source the Fount divine;
The rose-blow of immortal youth
Within the Spirit's shrine;
Its sacred leaves with dews are pearled,
Distilled from skies in Eden-world.

Poetry is Light;
Its mild vivific rays
Scatter the mists of mental night,
And wake the Soul to praise.
Brighter than sun, and moon, and star,
To fainting hearts its glories are!

Poetry is Thought,
Which like a flame aspires,
And in the Soul's grand mouldings wrou
Burns with celestial fires.
In rapture flow its glorious strains
Along Imagination's veins.

Poetry is Art;
With proud and princely will,
It paints the passions of the heart
With bright, angelic skill.
Dipped in its splendour all things seem
Ethereal as Hebe's dream.

Poetry's the Soul
Of Nature's melodies,
Sung by the Seasons as they roll
Their circle through the skies.
And all their aspects, wild or calm,
It wreathes with flowers and steeps in b

Poetry is Joy,
Which sings o'er graves of years;
Beauty, in every sweet employ,
And pathos, sown with tears.
Brimming the eyes like violets twain,
Dishevelled in the Summer's rain.

Poetry is Hope,
With Iris in its eye,
And Music borne to God's blue cope
On wings of harmony.
'Tis like that Harp of sweetest tone
Which heaven's own airs can play alon

Poetry is Faith;
It sees the throne of God,
Beyond the frozen seas of death,
In realms by Angels trod.
It blossoms brightliest above,
Where all is pure and perfect love!

THE BROKEN PROPHECY.

:MORIAL ODE ON THE DEATH OF A YOUNG POET.

e was Nature's loving child,
as of beauteous things a part;
shot its sunshine in his heart,
ushed his veins like rosy wine;
ver Summer's glory smiled,
aves and flowers were all divine.
illed to Song's ecstatic art,
:he wind a reed;
d as dies the Daisy—full
cious, golden seed.
:circle run, the Sun up-called
ystal drop of rain;
ı the God-land beautiful
gs a higher strain.

ed each sunny slope and slip;
e would murmur songs for ever,
stream of Life ran by,
Bird beside a river,
g to the Sky.

ecret spot and cloistered nook
ght, far from the strife of men,
on his mental solitudes
tfall broke in the deep woods,
g some enchanting book;
have seen him shyly dip
the shadow of the glen,
child a-hunting flowers;
he corners of cool, musky caves,
vith dripping, dewy showers,
ıe damp of open graves,
; in loneliness and gloom,
ı strange, wild prophecy
es that live, and hopes that die,
:oss he bore, the Crown to come.

nbed the crag and mountain-top,
ved the valley's tranquil hush;
ınsied mead, the sylvan slope;
lked with God in every bush.
time the Dawn, with fiery ring,
d earth and heaven through gleaming
st
y, gold, and amethyst,
he Lark his Soul would sing,
ıarm the happy flying hours,
the blue-eyed laughing Spring
:ints of her sweet feet in flowers.

led his symbols of the true
lowers that hid in shady dells,
ses wan, and tall blue-bells,
gling springs, and gleaming shells,
lowworms banquetting on dew,—
g high for young renown,
anting for the Poet's crown.
ere were themes of broader scope,
ich he sang through the lone night,—
m and Love, and Truth and Light,
ir and Sorrow, Joy and Hope,
ı *glimpses of the Dawn,*
vphecies of night withdrawn.

But silently his cheek grew pale—
The Spectre white was on his trail.
He came as comes the falling leaf—
Through the shroud of early grief.
His grip was on his heart-strings now
Song in his Soul, stars on his brow.
Out of some overburthened heart,
God's oracles for ever start,—
The watchwords of the Ages—Songs,
Like thunder-peals, of human wrongs;
Songs that nestled 'neath the eaves
Of lowly Cots, of comfort bare;
Tunes that bind mankind in sheaves,
Volcanic strains of burning Woe,
Passion's agonizing throe,
Splendours grand, and gleamings fair
Of Phantasy and wild Despair,
The frenzy of the Battle-strife,
And all the changing moods of Life.

He loved as only Poet can;
And he adorned his Bride of Love
With diamonds of precious thought,
That through Love's deepest channels ran;
Heart-pearls and jewels rich, that caught
Divineliest hues of Heaven above;
Dreams of the clasping Cherubim,
Bright words, that make the vision swim,
Nights of stars, and seas of gems,
Ambrosial garlands of the Spring,
Clusters of peerless diadems,
The lore of Love's imagining,
Like linked roses trailed along,
Reeking through fragrant Myth and Song.

He sought within his bright young soul
New dreams of joy. Love's image stole
Into his heart, like dews that fall
In crystal chimes of starry light,
In moon-pale lilies paradised,
From the swinging orbs of Night.
Poet 'mid the toiling throng,
He smote the chords of human hearts,
Awaking ecstasy and wonder,
As over rich groves rolls the thunder.
'Tis Love that makes the Poet strong;
And bearded men, grown white with years,
Hung on his words like bees on flowers,
And leaned upon their staffs in tears.

His Lamp of Life, in chilling showers,
Blew out one Night; his frozen hand,
Pale with Consumption's blanching blight,
Clasped one white palm, which, like a lily,
Trembled in his own so chilly—
His tearful Bride's, who counted o'er,
In the dim chamber's feeble light,
The ebbing pulses of that heart
Which soon would ache no more—no more.

Now in God's harvest he doth reap,
Whose yearning life on earth was brief.
Oh heart! Oh Love! why vainly weep?
He overleaped the world of grief;
Soft voices and true hearts were nigh;
He panted to attain the goal,
His eyes fixed on the starry sky,
And Heaven reflected in his Soul.

When I beheld him drawing down,
Like fire from heaven, his thoughts sublime,
I saw, beyond the Cross, the Crown,
The flower and coronal of Time.
I fondly hoped the stirring strain
Of music, which he sang so free,
Unto the world would long remain,
And melt its bosom tearfully.

The heir to an estate of fame,
Where glory's richest sunlight falls,
Methought I saw his treasured name
Stream out in old Valhalla's halls.
Brief as the shimmering raindrops' arc,—
The mirror of Life's countless ills,—
His eager Soul o'er-shot the mark,
And vaulted o'er the moon-kissed hills.
His Life, like sea-weed, drifted on,
The sport of changing tides, whose shocks
Ofttimes would dash him on the rocks,
And leave him bleeding and alone.
The Warrior winneth red, red gold,
The Statesman place and power,
The Poet earneth pangs untold
Till death's releasing hour.
Oh precious Soul! Oh faithful Heart!
That blossomed from the violet root;
From youthful Love thus torn apart—
Of glorious promise—small the fruit.

I have beheld his sad, dark eyes
Weep over a wild Bird's nest,
As if the gaping brood had lain
In his own loving breast;
And I have seen him watch the Lark
At Morn, and lean his ear to hark,
Held by the rich, melodious spell,
Until his aching eyelids fell.
Perchance he could the path descry
Of sunbeams which his Soul would go
When it should leave its nest below,
And rain down music from the Sky.

Spring came, and saw a Woman pale,
And as a statue still,
Looking toward the primrose-vale,
And over the heath-clad hill.
Her eyes looked for the bridegroom, gone
Where Love dies never more.
The angel-browed sate calm alone;
But he had left the shore.
I mourn not for the early Friend,
Who shed his Life like leaves in Spring:
I mourn the broken Prophecy—
The promise reft—the shattered wing.
His was a Soul of higher worth
Than centuries of births have given,—
A precious flame Love lit on earth,
To shine amid the Stars of Heaven.

LOOKING BACK.

An Old Man sheltered beneath a rock,
With its greenest fringe of pine,
And on his brow each silver lock
Like a sunset-cloud did shine.

Death kissed his white cheek whiter yet,
As passed him rushed his wing;
But the rock stood like a diamond set
In the Sea's eternal ring.

A Maiden stood by a bubbling well,
The loveliest of Eve's daughters,
And her heart kept time to the crystal swell
Of its melodious waters.

The crimsoning rose-buds of disease
On the Maiden's cheek grew early;
And calmly she sleeps by the willow trees,
While the well is rippling pearly.

Oh! Life is a woeful thing, and brief,
When we dream of some great endeavour;
It drops from the bough like a faded leaf,
And eludeth our grasp for ever.

We stand like trees in our Summer-bloom,
Old Time on our blossoms snowing;
Ere the rich ripe fruitage stars the gloom,
We die in the death-winds blowing.

WELLINGTON'S MARCH.

I remember my Grandsire hoary
Drawing me close to his side,
To tell me of Wellington's glory,
Old England's wonder and pride.
To his dazzling deeds I listened,
And seemed to grow six-feet-one;
My soul with the splendour glistened
Of glorious Wellington.

Yes, he was the darling of battle,
Unflinching in truth and right,
Heroic 'mid War's stormy rattle,
Victorious in every fight.
And now I'm grown older and bolder,
Come listen to me, my Son;
The World never boasted a Soldier
Equal to Wellington.

Let the fields he conquered slumber,
Green o'er them grows the sod;
The Chiefs he o'erthrew without number
Are resting at peace with God;
No longer the strife he wages,
To his last hard bed he is gone,
And History's grandest pages
Will shrine our Wellington.

His chivalry made our King-land
Illustrious and admired;
He thought not of self but England,
Saluted her and retired.
His Army, who could withstand her?
And his Guards who conquer? None,
When led by the great Commander—
Immortal Wellington.

His forces at length he counted,
To enter the highest skies;
Death's car he suddenly mounted,
And took him with great surprise.

Death saw his fierce dart was broken,
And the long-watched Hero gone;
But a smile was left, in token
Of conquering Wellington.

When carried to Nelson's Haven,
A Nation's great heart did bleed;
And tears of regret were graven
E'en on the face of his Steed.
He knew his loved Lord was lying
With life's latest battle won,
For the noble Horse was sighing
O'er gallant Wellington.

He laid on his Country's altar
A Spartan courage and zeal;
Could never from duty falter,
And his word was as true as steel.
So speak of the grand Duke ever
With pride for what he has done,
For a Captain the world had never
The match of Wellington.

ACT AS BECOMES A MAN.

Is there a Star that does not shine,
Is there a Flower without its scent,
In all Creation's span ?
Perform thy part, the Soul's divine,
Be thou what Heaven hath meant!
Act as becomes a Man.

If new irradiations beam,
And overflow thy mounting Soul,
Heed not the Sceptic's ban.
Pour thou abroad the lucid stream
Wide as the billows roll.
Act as becomes a Man.

'Tis mental hunger crowns the great,
And moral strength of Thought and Will,
To dare what valour can.
Whate'er may be thy mortal state
The World is all up-hill.
Act as becomes a Man.

What Soldier longs for peaceful fields?
What Sailor sighs for sunny seas ?
Since war and waves began.
To Labour's stroke the granite yields,
No gods take shape from ease.
Act as becomes a Man.

Behold those wondrous Orbs of Fame
That shine for ever! When they wrought
Their grand conception's plan,
No failure quenched Hope's glorious flame,
While climbing Alps of Thought.
Act as becomes a Man.

To be a Man is not to shine
In raiment rich and gems of gold,
With Pride's plume for a fan.
'Tis not to sport on seas of Wine,
O'er rocks of ruin rolled.
Act as becomes a Man.

To be a Man is God to fear,
To fly from Passion's painted breast,
Truth's Angel-form to span ;
The Ship of Right to boldly steer,
And ride o'er Danger's crest.
Act as becomes a Man.

A ray from every little Star
Illuminates the midnight sky,
And beautifies its span.
Each Heart can love-beams shed afar,
And hush some Spirit's sigh.
Act as becomes a Man.

Go write thy name on human hearts
In sunbeams from the fount of Love,
And deeds that Heaven may scan.
When Men perform heroic parts,
Angels applaud above.
Act as becomes a Man.

A CANZONET.

Fallen Vine in dust that lieth,
Over thee the Zephyr sigheth ;
And the Tree deserted crieth
Over thee.
Darling, mine, how I regret thee!
I forgive thee, not forget thee.
What to me are song and gladness ?
There is nothing left but madness,
While I weep these tears of sadness
Over thee.

Spring hath bloomed, but soon departed!
Even the Baby, since we parted,
Sobs as if 'twas broken-hearted
Over thee.
Once thy tones of Love were sweeter
Than the dew, alas! and fleeter.
Though all other bonds be broken,
Lives one link of love the token ;
Thousand thoughts must ne'er be spoken
Over thee.

Wilt thou grieve when I am sighing ?
Wilt thou know when I am dying ?
Will my Child be near me, crying
Over me ?
Ever in my prayers I'll name thee,
Ever bless thee, never blame thee,
Till the Robin o'er me singeth,
Where the faithful verdure clingeth,
While the tearful Daisy springeth
Over me.

DEAL GENTLY WITH THE MOTHERLESS.

Deal gently with the Motherless,
And let your words be kind :
A treasure like the one she's lost
That Girl can never find.

And if an Angel visits earth
A drooping heart to cheer,
Oh! surely then to bless that Child
One must be hovering near.

Deal gently with the Motherless:
She's like the homeless Dove,
Far from that ark—a Mother's breast,
Bereft a Mother's love.
Yet gladness beamed upon her birth,
As on a bud in Spring;
Then keep a corner in your heart
For that dear lonesome thing.

Deal gently with the Motherless,
And soothe her Soul's despair;
And remember, oh! remember,
Her Mother's last fond prayer.
Tell her something of that saint
Who lulled her on her breast,
And point her to the Angel-Land
Where now she is at rest.

Deal gently with the Motherless,
And do not harshly chide;
But lead her by your tenderness,
And win her to confide.
So shall you gild her cloud of Grief
With rays of other years;
And your words shall seem like music
Amid a world of tears.

Deal gently with the Motherless,
Whose heart so often aches,
Pray for the Orphan when she sleeps,
And kiss her when she wakes;
For in the path she has to tread
The thorns will spring with flowers,
And snares are laid to lure the young
By all the evil powers.

Deal gently with the Motherless:
Your own dear Child may share
Bereavement's cup of bitterness,
Instead of tender care.
And would you wish its gentle heart
To feel a Stranger's frown?
On those who bless the Motherless
Kind Heaven bestows a Crown.

THE STEPMOTHER.

She married him basely, grown weary
Of flirting and living alone;
For Mammon surrendered her honour,
And hardened her heart into stone.
The joy-blooming vines of Affection
Were crushed by a nature so cold;
And Home, with its bright hopes and duties,
Was wrecked through the Canker of Gold.

She knew all his sensitive Spirit,
She knew his emotional heart,
His Nature disdaining to bear it,
Yet barbed with her vengeance the dart;
Yet she was a Saint in the temple,
A Lamb in the heavenly fold,
And none would have thought that her bosom
Was cursed with the Canker of Gold.

Her brain was a bureau of treasures,
With a thousand mystical caves;
Her heart was a feelingless fossil,
Unchanged by Time's conquering waves;
Her face was as rigid as marble;
Her eye as an iceberg was cold;
Lips pinched, and complexion all whiteness,
Burned out with the Canker of Gold.

Tricked out, she appeared like a Lady,
So faultless and pure was her taste,
With a meek, bland smile rather winning,
And manners so proper and chaste.
These were the arts she had studied;
Her age was a secret untold,
With her veil always down so demurely,
A mask for the Canker of Gold.

She might have been great as an Actress,
But useless indeed as a Wife:
No gleam of affection or pity
To gild the dark canvas of Life.
When trouble once entered the dwelling,
Away in her carriage she rolled,
With her wardrobe and casket of jewels,
And all through the Canker of Gold.

Take heed, Lady-Wife, there's a Spirit
That follows you everywhere:
The Mother of those you've neglected,
Whose hopes you have blighted, is there!
Turn, turn, on your pillow when dying,
Her Ghost in your chamber behold;
Then pray to the God of the Orphan,
To banish the Canker of Gold.

SONG TO A COMET.

Hail, beauteous Mystery! wandering Fire!
Bright Cherub, borne on wings of light,
With silvery veil and gay attire,
Illustrious Stranger of the night!
Outvying orb, gem of the skies,
With thee an Age is born and dies.

Swift Pilgrim of the spangled Sky,
No harbinger of dread art thou,
With thy calm face and burning eye,
Thy gracious mien and splendid brow.
Whence comest thou, thou glorious Guest?
Where goest thou an Age to rest?

The orbs of Heaven in homage bend
Before thy throne of royal state,
Angels thy gorgeous Court attend,
And, hovering round thee, wondering wait.
Rapt Earth beholds thee on the wing,
And all her Empires shout, "A King!"

The Sun, majestic King of day,
Yields not to thee his realm of gold;

The Moon asserts her queenly sway,
  Invites thee to her Palace old:
And all the Stars, like minstrels, throng,
To hail thy presence with a song.

Thy radiant star-face wears no frown,
  Thy smile gilds mere, and mount, and main;
Com'st thou some Epoch grand to crown?
  Night's Watchman! with thy shining train.
The Firmament thou sweepest o'er,
Patrolling past my Cottage-door.

Thou seem'st a symbol to my ken
  Of Kings whose empire was the Mind,
Whose sceptre was the keen, strong Pen,
  Who left a trail of light behind;
Who kindled Worlds with Truth's pure blaze,
Then passed for ever from our gaze.

Farewell! fleet Orb, for one bright hour
  We marked, with souls entranced, thy flame;
'Tis thus with Genius, Glory, Power,
  Ambition, Pageantry, and Fame.
They brightly flash, and swiftly fade,
And are but as the Comet's shade.

HOME FEELINGS.

WHATEVER our fate, wherever we roam,
We yearn for the loving hearts at Home.
Oh! blest and beautiful inner Life,
Excluding a world of care and strife,
  By the cozy nook,
  With a friend or a book,
'Neath the Old Roof-Tree how sweet! how dear!
As Village bells to the wanderer's ear.

By the hearth of Home recruiting rest,
And vital vigour expand the breast.
'Tis there that our failing strength we gird
To conquer Despair with a Hero's sword:
  A Shrine of Love,
  Like the Home above,
Hallowed by reverence, praise, and prayer,
With Parents and Brothers and Sisters there.

On the tented field the Soldier's heart
At the cherished name of Home will start;
And the Sailor thanks God for the Beacon-light
That shines from his native cliff at night.
  With a joy as great,
  Whether soon or late,
When the noblest work of Life is done,
May our heavenly Home above be won!

SHAKSPERE.

THOUGHT'S Archangel! Laureate of the World!
  Three hundred years ago was Shakspere born,
An Orb of living light new-kindled, hurled
  Above the mists of Time, the fadeless Star of Morn.

Jubilant with joy, we laurels bring
  To wreathe in homage round his lofty brow;
But like those Chiefs who came to crown a King
  We cannot reach his head, so at his feet we bow.

By winding Avon, in yon narrow room,
  His eyes of wonder op'ed one happy Spring;
His Guardian Angels glorified the gloom,
  And that young Child became the worshipped Poet-King.

His lore he learned from Nature's living Book;
  Stars were his fellows and the Flowers his friends;
His notes he caught from bird and bee and brook,
  And all things aggrandized for noblest aims and ends.

Anthems of Thunder on the Lightning's tongue,
  Sunlighted cliffs, where laughed the waves in joy;
Earth, Ocean, Air, in one loud concert sung,
  And Nature's touch awoke the Spirit of the boy.

He toiled with aching heart and burning brain,
  Bereft of Fortune's gales and sunny rays;
Yet rose triumphant o'er the waves of pain;
  An universal mind with universal praise.

Despising none, he mirrored on his scroll
  Of Kings and Peasants all the hopes and fears,
And awful visions thronged his mighty soul,
  Whose pictured shapes shall haunt the galleries of years.

Sweet thoughts were his, and rich luxuriant dreams,
  Embossed and laurelled with sublime display;
And all the passions with their fiery gleams
  Were incarnations draped in his immortal lay.

He painted with a pencil, dark or bright,
  The struggling human heart on Ruin's tide;
Bending in grandeur to Misfortune's might,
  Or borne erect 'mid grief by intellect and pride.

Impassioned limner of man's joys and woes,
  His wondrous canvas glowed with colours rare;
Grim ghostly terrors from the grave's repose,
  Sunshine and storms and all the Spirits of the air.

Of Love he sang in dialect divine,
  Of Innocence and Faith 'mid chilling showers;
Of Filial Duty, Hopes to death that pine,
  And Mercy that enwreathes the hardest heart with flowers.

Life was to him a Drama, earth a stage,
The Universe a Theatre sublime;
Mankind were Actors, every Scene an age,
And Angels the Spectators of the deeds of time.

The crystal Palace of his brain enshrined
The intellectual riches of all lands;
Nature endowed, art beautified his mind,
And, like twin sisters, kissed each other and joined hands.

His melodies were wild, or soft, or grand,
As wind-harps in pale Autumn's leafless wood;
Faint music wafted from the Spirit-land,
Or strains of mountain-bugles tingling through the blood.

With Inspiration's burning zeal he wrought,
And from his brain the fire-fledged fancies flew;
Or sprang star-pointing pyramids of thought,
Embalming in their shrines the beautiful and true.

Earth's Beacon he shall stand while ages whirl—
Of Genius true the most resplendent gem!
The precious, pure, pellucid, perfect pearl
Serenely sparkling in the Muses' diadem!

When in the Summer heaven the warm Sun reigns,
And mellow harvests mantle earth with grace,
Who would repress the gladness in his veins,
And count the seeming spots on its refulgent face!

Or when the Rainbow with a blooming kiss
Imprints the forehead of the dying storm,
Who would behold its beauteous bower of bliss
And see dark tints enwove 'mid its ethereal form!

And Shakspere is our peerless King of Light,
Our Harbinger of grander epochs still;
When royal intellect shall rule in might,
And Love's blest arms encircle every vale and hill.

Sun-like he rose upon the sky of Time,
And shot his rays into the human heart;
And all the treasures of each tongue and clime
Were lavishly unrolled on Nature's lovely chart.

Old England in his glory-beams was glad—
He woke her Minstrels, made her Children smile;
Begemmed her flowers, her hills with verdure clad,
And swathed in bloom and splendour all her *sea-girt isle.*

And if her power should wane, her kingdom fall,
Her pomp and wealth sink in Oblivion's sea;
And Desolation's shroud around her crawl,
Her Shakspere's deathless name her monument would be.

HYMN TO THE STAR OF LOVE.

SOFT roseate Star of Love
On Evening's virgin breast,
Art thou the home of my Darling, my Dove,
Gone to her silent rest?
We breathed our early vows
Beside this bowery tree,
While Nightingales sang, 'mid its blossomed Boughs,
Their plaintive melody.

The kingly Sun went down,
With robes in crimson rolled;
Rich jewels bestudded his brilliant crown:
His throne was blazing gold.
We saw the Summer-scene
Blush in his farewell smile,
Which lovingly lingered on mountains green
That gird our Mother-isle.

We watched thy round disk rise,
A gem of silver hue;
And this wood-nook gladdened the angels' eyes
With two hearts beating true.
Perchance thou lov'st to mark
The spot she made so dear,
Like her Spirit bright, through the dewy dark,
Dropping a pearly tear.

The brooklet kissed our feet,
While rose yon Starry Seven.
Flowers, Music, and Love made the air so sweet,
It seemed the breath of Heaven.
All is familiar still,—
The daisy-dappled knoll,
The river, the cottage, the flock-bleached hill;
But ah! how changed my Soul!

The gay-winged hopes I nursed
Are fled, for ever fled:
Like painted bubbles my visions have burst
Since my dear Love is dead.
The dewdrops gem the thorn,
Life thrills through Nature's core,
A rosy bloom mantles clover and corn,
But she is here no more.

We met, these haunts we trod;
We loved, with purest flame;
We parted, to garner the sheaves of God
The white-robed Angels came.
If thou art still her shrine,
Tell her, bright Orb, from me,
Her memory lives in this heart of mine,
That pants her face to see.

UNDER THE CHESTNUT BLOSSOMS.

'Tis sweet to know that lowly hearts
May converse hold with Beauty,
And worship in a Temple grand,
Ne'er darkened by the Creeds,
Where blossoms kiss the tear-wan cheek
And woo the Soul to duty,
Renewing all youth's golden days,
And Life's most loving deeds.

Green elms and blossoming chestnuts,
And hedgerows snowed with May,
Sweet lilacs and laburnums,
And pearl-tinted apple-bloom—
All the flower-balm and love-music,
Gushing from each branch and spray,
Are pictures, wrought by angel-hands,
Of scenes beyond the tomb.

Why do ye fade, ye blossoms fair,
In all your pristine glory?
Why do ye shed your leafy crowns
Ere blow the Summer-flowers?
So early in the Spring of the year
Ye breathe your beauteous story,
Then scatter all your floral wealth
On this cold earth of ours.

In bonny, blushing clusters rich,
Ye hang upon the boughs—
Proud diadems of all the trees,
Gay monarchs of the land;
But diamonds like yours ne'er flashed
Above the queenliest brows,
Nor emperor ever wore a crown
Of jewels half so grand.

Oh! if I live until next Spring
Ascends from Winter's tomb,
I'll come from far to see ye burst,
And blush the leaves among—
Recalling happier days with one
Who faded in her bloom,
Whose heart was full of love for me,
As all these woods with song.

Haste hither, ye pale denizens
Of Cities, in your sorrow;
And before her glories wither,
Taste Nature's cup of bliss.
Some leaf of Song, or flower of Joy,
The poorest heart may borrow;
And whatever be the other world,
Make you the best of this.

HUNTING THE STAG.

The Stag is unharboured, he bounds at full speed,
Like a startled gazelle over valley and mead.
Beautiful Runner, how frightened his look,
As he pauses a moment to drink at the brook!

The Squadrons in scarlet are riding behind.
What terrible Foe do they gallop to find?
Now go they to battle with tigers, or where?
Not, surely, that poor timid creature to scare.

The Hunter he windeth his gay bugle-horn,
The bonny Stag dashes along in his scorn,
The sleek Hounds are panting, their mouths are athirst,
And whitened with foam as in music they burst.

The shy Quarry glances around in his speed,
Outstripping the pace of the Dog and the Steed,
Leaps over the fences, and crosses the flood,
And into his ambush—the forest and wood.

Again he is started: he hears the Dogs bay,
The tramp of the Horses fast coming his way,
The chidings and shoutings of Dukes, Lords, and Squires,
And sails half-amazed o'er the fields of the shires.

A Rider's unhorsed! on the ground see him lie!
With reins hanging broken his Steed gallops by.
His pallid lips quiver, there's blood on his face:
He knew not with Death he was riding a race.

The Stag in a Cottage for shelter has fled,
The children are clasping his neck and his head:
He sinks on the floor, so belated with fear;
But the howl of the Dogs sounds again on his ear.

He springs o'er the gate of the garden, and flies,
His spotted flanks heaving, and fire in his eyes;
With glidings and curvings, so graceful and proud,
He bounds through the Village, away from the crowd.

The Hounds are behind him, and close to his heels:
The steam of their breath on his haunches he feels:
They spring at his throat, out gushes the gore,
His dappled sides, bleeding, are mangled and sore.

His blood on the grass leaves a dark crimson trace,
As if the Earth blushed for man's crime and disgrace.
The Hunters surround him, he hears not their cheer:
His dull eyes are glassy, and deaf is his ear.

The Antlers he wore on his head like a crown,
Encrusted with gore, are for ever cast down:
The lithe limbs lie helpless, the delicate feet,
The quick-motioned head, the neck slim and neat.

The Forest-trees shudder, alarmed is the game,
The Corn hangs its head, as if conscious of shame,
The Song-birds in terror are perched on the crag,
All Nature seems mourning the death of the Stag.

THE POOR STROLLER'S LAMENT.

Low, low, where the Daisies blow,
My darling Wife. they laid thee:
My heart was the shrine of love of thine,
Ere the burial shroud arrayed thee.
Chime! chime! grey Sexton Time,
My brow with wrinkles graving;
There's only a tear and a grassy bier
'Twixt me and my Ellen waving.

Bring, bring, the fresh flowers of Spring;
But Love hath no second roses:
No more they bloom in the heart's cold tomb,
Where tender regret reposes.
Fast, fast, the storm and blast
Their rootlets strengthen ever:
Earth cannot part the ties of the heart;
Ah! never, Love. Ah! never.

Chill, chill, half round the hill
The Sun curved westward hieing;
And his parting beam, like an Angel-dream,
On thy white. brow was lying.
Rest, rest, on the Earth's green breast,
Dear Wife and lovely Daughter:
Good Angels will keep watch o'er your sleep
By the swift Tweed's purling water.

Low, low, where the Daisies blow,
'Tis well ye slumber sweetly;
For what would feed one mouth in need
Would famish three completely.
Wife, wife, the crown of my Life,
No hearse thy body carried;
We had coaches four, and bells a score,
The day that we were married.

World, world, is thy lip still curled
At the woes of a Strolling Player,
Because on the stage he feigneth rage,
Or laughs till none seem gayer?
Think! think! of the terrible brink
He treadeth in joy and sorrow;
To-night he's a King, while plaudits ring,
And a Beggar in rags to-morrow.

LOVE-BIRDS.

An advertisement appeared in "The Clerkenwell News,"—"Lost, a Love-bird. The Finder will be rewarded on restoring it, as it has left a mate, and these Birds cannot live when separated."

Love-Birds die when separated,
Pretty Mate of mine:
Whither, whither, art thou flying,
Lost one, while I pine?
Wooed and won, perchance another
Holds thy heart in snare;
And thou grievest me and leavest me
To languish in despair.

Love-Birds die when separated!
Why are we estranged?
Butterflels, with lives more fleeting,
Less than we have changed.

Half a heart thou hadst to give me,
Only that I fear;
Another smiling Swain beguiling,
While I'm sighing here.

Love-Birds die when separated!
Now I know thee well;
But my heart still clingeth to thee
By some fatal spell.
Love and Pride within me wrestle;
Though no more we meet,
Love will borrow strength from Sorrow,
Make lost kisses sweet.

Love-Birds die when separated!
May-be, where thou art,
Bluer skies and richer pastures
Bloom to charm thy heart.
If the wish to fly were pinions,
Here I would not pine;
But pour the sadness and the gladness
Of my Soul in thine.

Love-Birds die when separated!
Couldst thou say, "Good-bye?"
Dash with scorn my tortured Spirit,
Leave without a sigh?
Tread on my naked heart when anguish
Wrung me, crushed me most;
Then all my sighing, and even dying,
For thee would be lost.

Love-Birds die when separated!
Fly, oh! fly, sweet Bird,
Hither, hither, to thy lover,
While his voice is heard.
Bird of Paradise and beauty,
Wanderer, come, rest:
Flowers are springing, birds are singing,
Welcome to thy nest.

PARTED, BUT REMEMBERED YET

Ah! who has not felt a strange spell
Draw tighter the heart's crushed string
When bidding a dear one farewell,
To whom in despair it clings?
And why should stern Fate interpose
To sever two hearts that entwine?
Oh! where is the thornless rose?
Why may I not call thee mine?

Remembrance of thee I will keep,
While bitter tears flow for the dead:
'Tis more for the living I weep,
Whose dearer Affection is fled.
We may only be "Friends,"—no more.
That I love thee I need not tell.
The dream that we cherished is o'er,
Yet lingers unbroken the spell.

Before me thy dear image gleams,
A rainbow as fleet as fair;
For thou art the heaven of my dreams,
My thoughts are of thee in prayer.

Some flowers bespangle a bank,
  Some blossom on hill-tops high :
My "Friends" are not all of a rank,
  And nestled in love thou shalt lie.

Between us the billows may roll,
  And Age render feeble the strong ;
But thou art the light of my Soul,
  The sweetness and joy of my Song.
Thou seem'st of my Spirit a part,
  Though Hope is a leafless tree,
The tenderest place in my heart
  Is sacredly kept for thee.

CRŒSUS AND THE POET.

In his pomp and grandeur Crœsus
  Sate upon his throne of gold,
Fanned his sultry brow the breezes
  In the ruthless days of old.
From his lofty seat half-dozing,
  Looked he with a lazy smile,
Like a Crocodile reposing
  On the margin of the Nile.

Knelt a Poet, noble-hearted,
  For the Persian slaves of yore,
And the Lydian King upstarted,
  And his forehead darkened o'er ;
And his lemans and his minions
  Cast the Poet in a cell,
Till the Monarch's rich dominions
  Cyrus conquered, and he fell.

For the Poet's songs were ringing
  With immortal music brave;
Like a famished Lion springing
  On his prey upleapt the slave ;
And the Tyrant's chains no longer
  Could the trampled bondsman hold.
Freedom's glorious voice was stronger
  Than vain Crœsus and his gold.

Captive taken, splendour flying,
  Stript of every proud degree,
In his lonely dungeon lying,
  Who was now so poor as he ?
With no faithful Friend to cheer him,
  Stabbed by Memory's bitter sting ;
With no Wife or Children near him,
  Who would wish to be the King ?

Put to death by cruel slaughter,
  No man knoweth where he lies ;
But the Red Sea's whelming water
  Heard his death-shriek to the skies :
While the Poet's dust reposes
  Where yon marble column stands,
Crowned with Chaplets fair of roses
  Twined by loving hearts and hands

Fortune's Minion! spare thy pity :
  On the Poet all things wait :
It is neither wise nor witty
  To despise his hopeless fate.

Like a red leaf in December
  Will thy golden Idol fall,
'Mid thy riches, oh! remember
  He is great, and thou art small.

THE SOUL'S BATTLE-FIELD.

There is a wild, weird Battle-Field,
  Whose strife the eye may never scan,
With mighty strength of sword and shield,
  Within the heart and brain of man.
And wondrous Armies fiercely fight,
  By dusky seas and islands green:
Their camp-fires blaze by day and night,
  Their tomb or triumph both unseen.

Angels and Demons warfare wage,
  Ranked on the Soul's grand battle-ground;
And the belligerent hosts engage,
  While awe and silence reign around.
A panoply to each is given,
  And each a plume of splendour bears:
One dons the livery of Heaven,
  The other Hell's regalia wears.

Encamped in gloom the legions throng,
  The Passions show their proud array,
The Virtues form in phalanx strong,
  While front to front they stand at bay.
Goodness and Evil grapple there,
  Scorched by Ambition's fiery breath;
And Love, Hate, Faith, Doubt, and Despair,
  Ride on the stormy wing of Death.

If Demon-hosts success obtain,
  The heart becomes a wasted bower,
Infernal reptiles storm the brain,
  And wither every hallowed flower ;
But from his Star-Throne God looks down,
  If Angel-bands the Victory claim,
And stoops from Heaven their brows to crown
  With chaplets of Immortal Fame.

WHY DOES THE POET SING?

The Sun will shine at morn,
  The Tree will leaf in spring,
The Flower will deck the thorn,
  The Lark will soar and sing ;
And the Poet will chaunt his roundelay,
With a joy as great and a heart as gay.

The perfume of the Rose,
  When crushed, may float and fill
With sweets each wind that blows,
  And wanders where it will ;
And from the Rose, of beauty shorn,
Fresh Roses may spring another Morn.

Go mark the red-May tree
  Lean o'er yon mossy wall,
Entranced with the melody
  Of the woodland Waterfall.

It waves its soft and delicate curls
From a queenly crown of buds and pearls.

How rosy glows its blush,
As wooingly doth float
Of the enamoured Thrush
The rippling, fluent note.
Many a Spring, in that Sylvan gloom,
The Tree unknown hath diffused its bloom.

'Twere vain if it could say,
"My boughs shall bloom no more,"
The fingers of young May
Would wreathe them as before.
Her kisses would kindle Love's pure flame,
And Birds and Blossoms come just the same.

So the Poet vainly vows,
When in neglect he grieves,
To bear upon his brows
No more of Fancy's leaves.
But a Spirit comes, unsought, like Spring;
And his heart must break or begin to sing.

He hangs his Harp of fire
Where Nature's breezes play,
And every tuneful wire
Responsive breathes her lay.
Of Ages he hears the march sublime,
And stamps his image on all his time.

Where is the Poet's home?
Go ask Morn's circling beams;
Ask hurricanes, Heaven's dome,
Ask seas, and skies, and streams;
Ask Nature, his old eternal nurse,
The Poet's Home is the Universe.

A CHANSON OF LOVE.

My Darling needs no jewels bright
To deck her breast, or neck, or arm;
Their richest scintillating light
Would hinder more than aid each charm.
Let others pearls and diamonds wear;
But hers is a transcendent grace,
A Mind adorned with honour rare,
And kindness beaming in her face.

'Tis in herself the Jewel lies,
Where Heaven's best gifts profusely shed
Are mirrored in her loving eyes,
And wreathed around her beauteous head.
Let others bask in borrowed rays,
My love wears Nature's diadem:
She need's no ornamental blaze,
Her heart outrivals every gem.

Her lips are rubies warm and bright,
That shield the heart when wrong is nigh;
Her eyes are sapphires, sparkling bright
With promise of a cloudless sky.
The opal, mingled with the rose,
Upon her cheek in beauty dreams;
Two spotless pearls her bosom shows,
Where Faith and Love shed angel-gleams.

Oh! if I might some Jewel choose,
That gem the fabled charm should own,
To make her every Swain refuse,
And reign my bosom's Queen alone;
But yet she hath a witchery fine
All Ophir's wealth could ne'er impart,—
The yearning of a Soul divine,
The candour of a truthful Heart.

THE MOTHERLESS CHILDREN.

What will the poor little Children do?
Their Mother is dead, and the grave is her bed,
And her heart is cold that loved so true.
No longer she sits in her easy chair,
With loving smiles at their tottering feet;
The Nightfall comes, and she is not there,
To kiss their lips in affection sweet.

What will the poor little Darlings do?
For a Mother's breast is a place of rest,
And there is not one so kind and true.
'Tis hard, when comfort and wealth abound,
To lose a fond Mother; but harder still
When clouds of care are gathering round,
And Toil has so many mouths to fill.

What will the poor little Orphans do,
That Infantile band, for a Mother's hand,
Who made their clothing so neat and new;
Who taught their wee lips to praise and pray,
Well pleased as the heavenly path they trod,
When hand in hand, on the Sabbath-day,
Together they went to the house of God?

What will the poor little Lambkins do
For a Mother so dear their hearts to cheer,
And make them so lovely and sweet to view?
Alas! o'er each Child has fallen a shade,
And meekly its Mother's name it speaks.
Ah! now, methinks, will silently fade
Those dimpled smiles and rose-bright cheeks.

What will the poor little Weepers do
If another should come to their darkened home,
Whose words are stern, and whose smiles are few,
Who maketh their cup of woe run o'er,
As memory flits to that Mother mild?
Kind Angels, come from the Blissful Shore,
And fold your wings round the Orphan Child!

What will the poor friendless Orphans do?
Oh! let them not miss their Mother's soft kiss,
Dear Father! they're all the world to you.
They ask your love in their tender years,
And a two-fold duty to you is given,
For their Mother's sake to dry their tears,
And teach them to meet her a Saint in Heaven.

THE LAUGHING MAIDEN.

It is said there exists a plant in South Arabia which causes those who take it to laugh and sing. It is no uncommon joke for lovers to put some of its powdered seeds into the beverage of their maidens; it is exhilarating, but not injurious.

Thy Sun of existence in beauty arose,
No clouds overshadowed the tremulous rose,
With music the groves and the merry woods rang,
And sweetly the Skylark its roundelay sang.
No tear but the dewdrop, no sigh but the breeze,
And lilted with laughter the leaves of the trees.

'Twas then that thy laughter threw magical spells
Around my young heart, like the pealing of bells,
As gentle and soft as the wood-pigeon's coo,
As fearless and free as a spirit that's true.
Thy heart was so tender, I trembled with fears,
'Twas like a bright April which melteth in tears.

Methought thou hadst quaffed of the Plant that is born
To make the heart lightsome, in spite of the thorn.
Oh! fill me a bumper, I'll quaff it with glee,
And make the grove ring with my laughter like thee.
Oh! give me a draught of the essence which flows
From the laugh-waking Plant, to forget my Life's woes.

Laugh on, lovely Girl, laugh on, it is May,
'Tis the glad Spring of life, and creation is gay;
Soon enough the bleak winds of the Winter will come,
The Flowerets will wither, the Songsters be dumb.
The cold winding-sheet of the Snow will be spread
O'er the desolate Earth where the Daisy lies dead.

I often have heard, 'mid the glory of Spring,
The Bird in the bush to its nestling mate sing;
I often have heard, in the depths of the vale,
The rich golden note of the rapt Nightingale,
But never, no never, on Earth could I hear
A music so sweet as thy voice to mine ear.

Should the Bird cease to sing in the beautiful sky,
Or the spring-flower cease to bloom, because Winter is nigh?
Shall girlhood and boyhood be grave and austere,
And banish sweet Mirth for the sigh and the tear?
Ah! no, laughing Maiden, be gladness still thine;
Thy being is laughter, I would it were mine.

The Rivulet laughs all its pebbled bed o'er,
And Echo laughs back from the opposite shore,
The happy Stars laugh at each other in love,
And twinkle with joy in their bright home above.
Hope laughs in thy Soul, Love laughs in thy heart:
I pray that thy laughter may never depart.

THE BLUE RIBAND OF THE TURF.

THE LESSON OF THE DERBY DAY.

"Come, let us go, while we are in our prime,
And take the harmless folly of the time."—Herrick.

'Tis England's annual Gala-day,
The feast of all the year,
The glorious and effulgent Sun
Rains splendour far and near;
And ere the first faint golden wave
Flows flushing o'er the land,
Great London is awake, astir,
From Stratford to the Strand;
From Temple-Bar to Notting-Hill
Life's torrent rolls and roars,
One mighty Sea of human Souls,
With houses for the shores.

But see the Sun's red standard floats
Towards the zenith higher,
And hangs above superb St. Paul's
Its crimson flag of fire!
And all that surging Sea of Life
Ebbs southward from the town,
And Kennington and Clapham throb
With dreams of old renown.
'Mid dust and heat the billows beat
Retreat by road and rail;
And gods and men are glad again
The Derby Day to hail.

As Bees come swarming from the hive,
Move on the glittering throng,
With humming noise and colours rich,
And gauzy veils and song;
On left and right their wings are spread,
For Epsom Downs they yearn,
And Mirth and Health shall be their wealth
When Homeward they return.

The road, the Queen's high road, is full,
No grander day could be;
The snowy bloom of May, like lace,
Adorns the hedge and tree;
And everything that runs or crawls,
That moves on legs or wheels,
Horsed or afoot, or man or beast,
The moment's rapture feels.
The young and old, the rich and poor,
Are mingled with good will,
And feel, as if linked hand in hand,
The same electric thrill.

A fig for those who say the World
Is but a howling waste,
And all who tour from flower to flower
Of joy have minds unchaste.

For here are many marching on
  Both temperate and wise,
Half of whose bliss it is to see
  The bliss in others' eyes.
And what if now and then occur
  A jostle or a bar,
It is not more than happ'd of yore
  In tilting for a star!
And every crash of wheel and horse
  In rough good humour ends,
Like equal strife in games of life,
  Among the best of friends.
And hands will pluck a fragrant branch,
  And kiss the blossoms gay,
And hearts be better for a glimpse
  Of beauty on the way.
And should that trampling host deface
  Green nooks which they explore,
Methinks their lives will feel some grace
  They have not felt before;
Some gleam of joy, some thrill of song,
  Within the breast to glow.
When in their workshops, halls, and homes,
  Where breezes seldom blow.

Behold the classic Course at last,
  The fresh Olympic ground;
A hundred thousand twinkling feet
  Along the greensward bound;
And gilded caravans and tents
  Encamp, disgorge, and gleam;
And wide and far, by field and hill,
  Rolls on the living stream.
The hawk-eyed men of money-bags
  Sad, anxious faces wear;
Their winner's name to-day is "Luck,"
  Their loser's is "Despair."
The Gipsy with her wrinkled cheek,
  And tanned and tawny skin,
Can tell her dupes the strangest things,
  But not the Horse to win.
Joy! joy! to those pure-hearted swains,
  Those lovers in the lane,
Retiring from the curious crowd
  To kiss and kiss again;
Or, seated underneath the boughs,
  O'erladen with the May,
They wish the bloom was Misletoe,
  And this was Christmas-Day.

Now rings the Bell its warning knell,
  And hearts begin to beat,
Like prisoners doomed to death for crime
  Their coming fate to meet.
Which shall it be, reprieve or death?
  Oh! who can break the spell?
For Hope and Fear within their breasts
  Can make a heaven or hell.

The Crowd stands like the forest-trees
  Whose breathless leaves are still,
Or like a rookery of crows
  That blacken all the hill.
The vacant Racecourse glimmers now.
  A winding strip is seen,
With slim black border intertwined,
  A maiden's belt of green.

The runners gallop gaily down,
  And myriad murmurs rise,
And whispers slip from lip to lip
  Which Horse will win the prize.
The proud Steeds prance, and wheel, and dance,
  As if to Music's strains,
And conscious of the noble blood
  That tides along their veins.
Their eyeballs flash like wild gazelle's;
  Ridged high each muscle stands,
Like swords in sheaths of velvet soft,
  Or gloves on iron hands.
The Signal's given; they start and dart,
  Choose places, and they fly.
"Now may the best Horse win the race!"
  Is every Sportman's cry.
Away they sweep in gallant style,
  Regardless of the cheers:
Yet seeming still, though brutes, to share
  Our human hopes and fears.
The Rider knows his Horse full well;
  The Horse his Rider knows;
And each to each, both man and horse,
  Will answer to the close.
Just like a rainbow o'er the ground,
  Or some strange meteor's glow,
Or like gay blossoms borne on wings,
  Their dazzling Colours show.

Their places change and change again,
  And watching faces change,
As round the Corner, down the hill,
  And to the goal they range.
Their places change in sight of home;
  One Steed with lion heart
And fiery eye has measured all
  The distance from the start.
Another yields his place long held—
  Another swerves in fear,
And some that promised well at first
  Are struggling in the rear.
They come—they come; on tiptoe stands
  The wonder of the Crowd;
"Now White!" "now Green!" "now Pink!"
  "now Blue!"
  They shout with voices loud.
"'Tis Crimson yields, and Yellow wins,
  Bravo!" they cry at last,
And, like an arrow from a bow,
  The winning Horse has passed.
They twine around his splendid head
  The well-won Riband Blue,
They wreathe his glossy mane with flowers
  Of every scent and hue;
They lead him to his happy stall,
  And feed him with the best,
Yet now he does not prouder feel
  Nor better than the rest.
The fulsome Crowd they cheer him loud,
  And scarce a thought is given
To those that have not gained the prize,
  Although they've bravely striven.
The Race is but a type of Life
  Whose prizes are so few,
And many a man the prize may lose,
  And yet deserve it too;

From causes which may not be faults,
And still beyond control,
A noble mind may faint or fall,
And fail to reach the goal.
Then let us give a hearty cheer
For those of small renown,
Who nobly strain both hand and brain,
But fail to win the Crown.

SERVICE.

"Is there aught liveth for itself alone?"
I asked Creation; and ten thousand tongues,
Responded, "No!" from Stars on Nature's throne,
To Birds that filled the forest with their songs.

"Is there aught liveth for itself alone?"
The Sunflower oped its lips, and breathed, "Not I;
Twelve aromatic ounces I am known
To offer daily to my King on high."

"Is there aught liveth for itself alone?"
The fairy Musk, with modest beauty, said,
"Not I; delicious odours I have blown
In chambers dim, while centuries have sped."

"Is there aught liveth for itself alone?"
The Dewdrop, with an eye of twinkling beams,
Exclaimed, "Not I! o'er nestling nooks I've flown,
And flowers refreshed enshrined me in their dreams."

"Is there aught liveth for itself alone?"
The Mignonette made the same answer sweet,
The Lilac-blossom, and the Chestnut-cone,
And every shrub whose heart with perfume beat.

There is naught liveth for itself alone!
A million hearts throb in a drop of rain,
Perchance with joys and sorrows of their own;
And Autumn leaves bear worlds in every stain!

There is naught liveth for itself alone!
By sympathy of feeling, thought, and will,
Some strange and subtle influence is thrown
From mind and body, working good or ill.

Thou canst not play, oh Man! an idle part!
In this great Universe of Light and Life;
With each pulsation of thy throbbing heart,
Eternal issues mingle with the Strife.

THE WAITING TREE.

An Old Oak grew by the rolling Sea:
I carved on its bark, "The Waiting Tree;"
For oft I sat in its rustic shade,
When Summer its bower of leaves had made.
By its mossy trunk I rested daily,
When the merry Songsters sang so gaily;
On its grassy knoll I leaned my head,
And methought in the hush of my Soul it said,
"I once was a tiny Acorn, trod
By a young Child's foot in the living sod;
By slow, sure degrees I steadfast grew,
While tempests in fury round me blew:
I've seen Time's pageantry come and go,
Through Summer's heat and through Winter's snow.
Now birds in my fresh green bower are singing,
Glad tidings of growing harvests bringing:
Their nests they build, and their young they rear,
And joyous Children are sporting near.
When Autumn's russet bedecks my boughs,
I shelter the sunbrowned reapers' brows.
The muscular Lion—the desert-King
Was once but a feeble suckling thing;
And what is the Future but the Present,
Fashioned by Thoughts and Deeds incessant?
And what is Man's Genius but a name
For Thought-strife, Love-power, Hope, and Fame?"
And so a lesson was taught to me,
As I sat under "The Waiting Tree."

The Birds in the branches sang a strain,
Like Angel-guests in my heart and brain,
"True Fame is growth, and its glorious dower
Falls not like dew on the Summer-flower;
But rich-hued Fancies fleeter fly
Than a Meteor's flash in the Polar sky.
If thou wouldst gather sweet flowers of Song,
They glisten the thorns of Life among.
One pearl, perchance, in a hundred shells
The Diver may find in the deep Sea-swells.
Thou need'st, a Conqueror's wreath to claim,
A Stranger's temper, a Pilgrim's frame:
Patience to bear with each load and loss,
Submission to Him who bore the Cross;
The price to be paid is toil and tears,
Though never a leaf on the Waste appears.
Work, with a sweet and secret yearning,
From Pleasure's tents and its votaries turning;
Work, though it never should bring thee renown;
Duty for God wins the noblest crown.
Labour, temper, talent, and time,
Oh! these will ring Fame's immortal chime."
This Song the merry Birds sang to me,
As I sat under "The Waiting Tree.

A BRIDAL GARLAND.

Sweet Maiden, thou art young and fair,
With beauty on thy brow;
The Future's glory lingers there,
Like Heaven's own promise-bow;
And like the Jasmine starry-white,
That hangs toward the ground,
Thou seem'st to me a thing of light,
Diffusing fragrance round.

Thy lips are like the opening flowers
Wet with the dews of Spring;
Adown thy neck in gleaming showers
The winds thy tresses fling.
Star-smiles are dimpling on thy cheeks,
With many a rosy ray;
And from thy mouth the music breaks
Like bursts of song in May.

I'll weave a garland for thy brow
Of fair and fadeless flowers,
One worthy of thy Bridal-vow,
From pure ambrosial bowers;
And richer than a rose-bud crown
Thy bright young brow 'twill press;
A wreath with more than diamonds sown
Shall deck thy loveliness.

I'll weave thee Virtue's lilies fair,
Culled from Youth's mossy dell;
And Innocence, a jewel rare,
Like dew shall on them dwell.
The vine of Joy, the rose of Love,
With Truth's green leaves shall be,
And violets, tinted from above,
Of sweet Humility.

The Moon is chaste and silver-bright,
Flower, leaf, and dew are fair;
The Stars that gem the Summer-night
Celestial glory wear;
But when the Moon hath died away,
And Stars and dew are gone;
When leaves shall fade, and flowers decay,
This Wreath shall blossom on.

THE TIGER AND THE CHILD.

FAR in the East, close by the Sea,
Fringed by a wild, dark wood,
Where monsters lurk in bush and tree,
The Chieftain's dwelling stood.

Black fell the Night, bleak blew the blast,
And in that gorgeous land,
Whene'er a sudden Storm swept past,
'Twas terrible and grand!

The Chieftain to the camp had gone;
His young Wife, fair and mild,
Sate thoughtfully alone,—alone,
With but her roseling Child.

O'ercome at length, the Mother lept,
And in its little cot
The infant-Boy had softly crept,
And honied slumbers got.

A lamp its quiet radiance threw
Upon a mirror's face,
Which then reflected every hue
And image of the place.

When suddenly amid the gloom,
Swift o'er the outer wall,
A Tiger sprang into the room,
And to the Child did crawl.

Just then the Mother oped her eyes,
And saw the fearful beast;
But held indrawn her fears and cries,
And did not move the least.

Oh, the intense and breathless pain
That shook the Mother's heart!
Was it a phantom of the brain—
Of some dark dream a part?

The royal Brute his fiery glare
Upon the mirror turned,
And saw his image scowling there,
And fierce with anger burned.

He gnashed his teeth, so did his foe;
He sprang—it did the same.
Crash fell the mirror with the blow—
He fled the way he came.

Then by her Child the Mother knelt,
The hour of peril braved,
And breathed to Heaven the thanks she felt,
So strangely it was saved.

THE ORPHAN MUSING OF THE LOVED AND LOST.

THE dear Dead, how they lie in their cerements glorified,
And there seems no other beauty out of Heaven beside
When the Heart is all alone—all alone in all the World,
And the banner of a Dream o'er the stricken is unfurled.

I was but a little Babe when they left me long ago,
But those twain love-smiling faces anywhere I should know,
And my little brother Henry, who died when he was young,
I remember that his voice was like an Angel's tongue.

Though in the Sky each dawn drops of molten splendour burn,
To Childhood's golden gardens we can never more return.
Cometh Spring-time for Robin—Summer for the Bee—
Corn for fields of Autumn; but they come no more to me.

The laughter of the Children never makes me glad,
And all my Mirth and Music make the Children sad;
They whisper one another when I am standing by,
And I know they say, "An Orphan." Oh, God! that I could die!

A wan, weird, Moon-like visage, which was very fair,
I remember fading out into the darkling air;
And a figure bending o'er me, with a fiery eye and large,
Like the Sun in thunder-rain on the horizon's marge.

I shape them into beauty 'mid the cheerful ember-gleams,
Hear their gentle voices in the dulcet-fluted streams;
In my tear-stained 'broidery I've wrought each precious name,
And in my softest music I ever breathe the same.

Sometimes I dream I walk a Paradise alone;
Among the blossomed arbours I hear a melting tone,
As of a bleating dam that for its lambkin pines:
I listen—'tis the Wind that stirs the Garden-vines.

Once I saw a Lady's form move gracefully along
Beneath the Linden trees, where the Birds held feast of song;
And ere I was aware I had clasped her hand awhile,
I thought within her eyes I saw my Mother's smile.

I've seen a little nest 'mong the leaves against the wall—
I've heard the Birdlings chirping in a concert, one and all,
When their Parents hung above them with their dewy food,
And oh! my Heart it's crying like that little brood.

Oh! absent ones, come back, come back! hear my helpless moan—
The God I pray to never made one Heart to live alone;
I know ye're somewhere near me; last Night, in my dreams,
Ye kissed my lips, and drowned mine eyelids in your beams.

What! desolate, all desolate, amid these gorgeous bowers!
Then break, O! break, my Heart, for withered are thy flowers;
Melancholy Moon and Stars, your beams quench in the Sea,
Since never come loved Faces back again to me.

Hark! the minstrelsy of Bells wafts o'er the dreary wold,
Singing, "The Flowers await thee in the Churchyard mould;"
But the soaring Eagle shouteth, 'mid the flapping of his wings,
"Dare to live, and God of joy will open other springs."

THE HEART'S TRAGEDY.

A STORY OF THE WRECK OF A HOUSEHOLD.

INSCRIBED TO THE REV. CHARLES KINGSLEY, AUTHOR OF "THE SAINT'S TRAGEDY."

THE ground-work of this story of a household was derived from a narrative of facts communicated to the Author by the Proprietor of a Lecture Hall in Newcastle-on-Tyne, during a visit to the ancient Abbey-Church of Tynemouth in 1852. Nothing has been added to the sad account but the poetic vesture.

SCENE I.—THE CHURCH IN THE FOREST-GLEN—THE TWO PASTORS—A CONTRAST.

THAT was the saintliest Church, which long ago
Stood garlanded with locks of glossy green,
Which hung in graceful tangles from its towers,
And porch and roof embowered to hide Decay.
The Ivy in its clustering beauty clung
With love-like tenderness, as a true Friend
Shieldeth a sad heart from the freezing frost
And blinding beam, and faithfully and fondly
Guards it when every cherished hope hath fled.
As to benighted traveller in the Storm—
When lightnings leap from kindled cloud to cloud,
And thunders roar like lions at his heels—
Beams through the folding dark a welcome Light,
Inviting him aweary with the night,
To shelter and repose, that Temple stood,
And beaconed to the open gates of Heaven
Earth's fainting Pilgrim on the roads of Life.
It shone a Lighthouse o'er the moral Sea
O'er which dense vapours lay like silent shrouds,
And quicksands glared up at each ebb of tide,
Like eyes of basilisks in briny sheen;
And many a world-tost mariner thanked God
That he beheld that Gospel-Lamp afar.

Behind the Chancel's rainbowed oriel rose
A shining group of grey cloud-visored rocks,
With ribs encased in granite armour grim,
And beards of ancient moss waved by the Wind;
At whose huge feet the fearless billows played,
Like children round an Army's bannered pride,
Smiting their glad palms at the gallant show.

Throned in the green heart of a Glen it stood,
Like a Star nestling in a heavenly vale,
Or some grey Hermit in a cowl of leaves,
Counting the bead-roll of his perished springs.

The Stars—the silver daisies of the sky,
And Dawn—the golden prologue of the day,
Long-lingered on its towers. Around its walls,
Now crumbling in the rains and snows of heaven,
The eloquent Thunder, with magnificent bursts
Of fiery declamation, and his eye

A-blaze with awful splendour, smiting down
The sapless tree like some old-rooted Wrong,
Looked with a smile upon its hoary brow,
And lightning-lidded wept above its graves.

'Twas grand to watch above its mossy roof
The Moon forth-faltering like a captive Queen
Whose kingdom is a dark and hollow cell,
Sad-eyed and lone from her high dungeon-tower
Gazing across the murk and midnight waves,
And weeping dim her beauty for her lord,
Who gives his life to revelry and Wine
In golden chambers of rich palaces,
While she is faint to death with hopeless grief;
What time she wears the glorious scarf of Night,
Powdered with bright innumerable stars,
Like the miraculous gold dust which gems
The wings of Summer's gorgeous Butterfly.

Oh, much I loved that deep green-worlded Glen,
Where Silence in the air hung half-entranced,
And fragrant with each heart-pulse of the Flowers;
And over the rough stones a little Stream
Sang pleasant music through the lapse of June,
Where the Birds stooped to drink before they sung.
Ay, sweeter melody that Stream evoked
From its white pebbles than the River's leap
O'er sands of gold. There oft in youth I mused,
My Fancy sliding with that happy Stream
Beneath the pendent blossoms far a-down
The winding dales of soft pellucid green,
By many a hundred broidered banks of bloom,
Until it melted like a flake of snow
In the hot sand-mouth of the hungry Sea.

Thence have I seen the Skylark make his ring
Before he darted up the golden Blue,
The flowery belts of Summer's verdure o'er,
Where the Horizon dips the purple hem
Of its fire-sparkled robe in glassy lakes,
A flying Angel, singing Harvest-Home,
For some sweet Poet's Soul gone up to God.
There oft I dreamed through many vagrant hours,
And energized my heart to nobler aims,
And Hope to glory touched my Soul's despair,
Like sunshine in a Winter cave of frost.

Adown the hill rang peals of hymning Bells,
Like fairy children trooping merrily,
Wreathing rich garlands of the flowers of sound:
Intoxicated with enchanted reveries,
For one brief hour, in thought, I was a King.

There did I ramble when the Sun went down,
Like Ship a-fire, and left above the waves
A pennon streaked with phosphorescent flames,
Or calmly burned along the western edge,
In splendid desolation grand with awe;
And in my heart I nursed the Poet's hope,
Though round my Life a cloud of blackness hung,
In which I struggled with a glowing faith,
As some poor wretch takes shelter in a Barn
From the bleak night-storm, and on tasselled straw
Sinks in the soft embrace of lulling Sleep,
Amid the cobwebs, and walks forth in dreams
Through Eden-groves, with palmfuls of fresh flowers,
While fairy scenes enchant his visual orbs,
And crown him with ethereal wreaths of Bliss.

Then Night took to her breast the weary World,
As a dusk Mother takes her white-faced Child
To her fond bosom, singing in its ears
Old legends in the voice of Nightingales,
Her wild heart pressed against the ancient thorn.
Rose to her throne the Moon, and her bright beams
Wavering, glistened through the clouds' pale prism,
Like a Saint's silver locks swayed to and fro
By the soft breath of prayer, while Stars alit
In beeish swarm upon the eve's blue Flower,
Dew-honeying to the full unpetalled core.

The Preacher was full-fruited, mild, humane;
Stooping to bless the Poor he could not aid;
Oft mingling with them in aspiring aims,
And making Merit to its patrons known.
Oh, he was like the branches of a Tree
Laden with golden blossoms, bending low;
His Soul was sensitive, as the subtle plate
Of the Sun-painter to the rays of light,
Reflecting delicatest shades of thought:
His homeliest words could touch the heart to tears.
Not like a tropic mountain veined with gold,
Whose bosom gushes with eternal streams
Which sparkle on to dusky-splendid Seas—
But a pure rill of unobtrusive grace.
He had few dreams that climbed the Alps of Mind,
Or fancies plucking at the brows of Stars;
Yet did he travel on no barren road
To gather the poor flowers another's hand
Had sown. But he was, Paul-like, bold and free;
He lit his Torch at Truth's new-kindled Spheres,
Which, like the fabled Bird, disdains to die.
It upwards shot upon a track sublime,
And backward flashed upon the darkened Crowd,—
No dazzling Meteor, but the steady Star
Which culminated over Bethlehem's hill
To set in heaven with a Halo-Crown.
His voice was gentle as a Woman's love,
Plaintive as dying Mother's to her Child,
And broken, like the strains of Nightingales.
But when he taught, it seemed as if his lips
Had kissed a Seraph's, and retained their flame;
And his Angelic stature seemed to rise
Up starry heights upon ecstatic wings,

And his eyes swam in love and sovran faith.
From heart to heart his words of wisdom ran
Like leaping fire. He was a Christian tree,
And by him climbed the frail vines to the Sun.
I loved him, for he was in all his acts,
Rebuking wrong and pleading for the frail,
The nearest pattern of the meek-browed Christ.
Then came one walking in his flower-light path,
And, ministering at the Altar he sublimed,
A devotee of Venus and of Wine,
Who made the Church his Bride in greed of gold,
Revelling in the light of ladies' eyes,
And scaring the pure Dove from nestling hearts.

The little Glen grew tangled o'er with weeds,
The Stream was choked, the Flowers in vapours died,
The merry Bells their tuneful voices lost,
The woodbines and the roses, mingling sweets,
Which grew about the Porch in tender twines,
Strewing their dead leaves o'er purpureal swards,
No longer bloomed, and all was desolate!

Oh, when I heard this jewelled Pharisee,
His words gnawed in my brain like viperous things,
And on my heart their cold dull accents fell
Like snow on Spring's green tree. Even as an Arab,
Wrinkled and scorched upon the Desert-sands,
And gasping with the fever of hot thirst,
While looking for an Oasis 'neath the shade
Of cedar trees and firs and spreading palms,
Deluded often by the Mirage-mist,
Findeth while Life's last sand is in the glass
A vessel in which his race from limpid streams
Their needful liquid bear, o'er Camels swung,
When on that fearful Pilgrimage they go,
And thanking God for mercy thus vouchsafed,
Opens the casket with an eager joy,
And in his disappointed bitterness
Exclaims, "My God! 'tis full of pearls!" and dies;—
So were the Souls that heard this worldling's speech.

His poisoned Fancy, like a gilded fly,
Now on the Rose's damask leaves alighted,
And thence on painted wings flew flutteringly,
And for the Thistle-flower the young Rose slighted.
With fervour, too, sometimes he seemed to glow,
Like sunlight over polar fields of Snow.
When thus illumined, his external shrine
Gleamed with a dazzling fascination fine,
But 'neath each Flower of the enchanted flame
Lurked a coiled Viper of remorse and shame;
Ambitious how to please, he won by stealth
Of an exterior beautified and bland;
His vain Soul full of Oriental wealth,
His cold Heart sterile as the Desert-sand.

SCENE II.—SUMMER IN THE COUNTRY—THE HAPPY HOUSEHOLD COTTAGE BY THE ORCHARD—THE MAIDEN'S DREAM OF HOPE AND JOY DISSOLVED.

THE Bells were sprinkling from the gloom-blue hill,
On the enchanted air, their weeping thrill
Of melody. The Sun was climbing high,
The Corn grew golden, and the rounded sky
Was full of Skylarks as a hive of bees;
Greened with cool grass were all the Village leas;
Half slumberous in the light they dreaming lay,
Belting with verdure sumptuous meads of hay;
White daisies silvered o'er the pasture lands,
And Summer shook from her delighted hands
Largess of blossoms which came pelting down
In snow-white showers from her exuberant Crown.
Crowning the level lawn, arose a fountain,
And Bees born in a cleft of Hybla's mountain
Sang ever round their swarming honeycombs;
Birds mated 'mong the ardent apple-blooms;
And, cooing from the leafy lattices,
Were milky Doves amid the flowering trees;
Hid in the glen-nooks brooded fledging wings,
In nests like swinging hammocks tied with strings;
Enskied in azure calm the grey Church shone,
Surrounded with a flower-bespangled zone;
And on the lake's marge where two white Swans swam,
Reposed a little Child and a young Lamb.

About that spot walked Nature, disarrayed,
Grand and irregular, sun blent with shade,
Making her toilet by some hermit brook,
Like a Narcissus crowned with regal flowers,
Gemming her rich locks in the mountain-nook—
Empalaced like a Spirit of the bowers,
And flashing back in virginal surprise
Disdainful scorn on the Sun's splendid eyes.

But there was one for whom these scenes in vain
Print their Elysian pictures on the brain—
A guileless Maiden. In this Eden-land
She was a blighted blossom; breezes bland,
Soft dawn, blue skies, broad sea, Love's witching lore
Would charm that beauteous insane Girl no more.

Her heart to the young Pastor op'd like Noon
To the gay Sunflower in the pomp of June;
As high and pure appeared to her his charms
As heaven's bright bow, and she put forth her arms
And clasped a melting cloud. She dreamed to soar
From her life-valley sphere to higher deeds,
With him to drink Heaven's streams for evermore,
Out of God's garden plucking alien weeds
With equal toil, and in celestial Bliss
Climb topmost rounds of Love and Holiness,

As from its trammels freed the Worm may rove
On fluttering wings o'er hill and vale and grove;
Gliding at will from flower to flower of Joy,
Sipping from honey-cups that never cloy.
To her young heart like Sun and Moon was he,
By day and night her lamp of destiny.
And as the Sun, enthroned 'mid golden beams,
Threw glorious radiance o'er the western streams,
So did the Idol of her heart appear
To pour his balm and blessing in her ear;
And when the Moon arose to gild the night,
And draw the leaping tide in silver light,
He came to her in sleep with visions blent,
And drew her being in Love's ravishment.
Thus flew Time cheerily, as doth a Bee
From bloom to bloom upon a wild-rose tree,
The honeycombs of future Bliss to build,
In Love's sweet Hymen-bowers with joyance filled.

One Morn he saw her in her arbour free,
Whence drooped the crimson flowers delectably
Above her dark-hued tresses' silken streams,
Touched into splendour by the Morning-beams,
Like some old Painter's glory. 'Twas a time
When the blood riots in the veins, I ween,
And she was in Life's efflorescent prime,
A gentle-hearted Girl of springs seventeen;
'Twas then that Passion, ere the twain did part,
Leapt like a fiery leopard in his heart,
Broke down the barriers Love left insecure,
And fed upon a life as Angel's pure.

'Twas sweet to drink from hands so chastely fair,
Adorned with the pure ring of Heaven's own Bride,
The Cup of perfidy and wild despair,
Dissolving Life's pure virgin pearl with pride.

SCENE III.—SUMMER—A BRIDAL PARTY—A WAIF UPON THE WAVES—MAN'S INHUMANITY TO WOMAN—THE HALL-KEEPER'S DAUGHTER INSANE.

WENT through the Village, whispers of a day
When she would be led forth in Bride array,
Attired in ornamental beauteous dress,
And Orange-Flowers her fair young brow would press.

One Morn the Bells were ringing merrily,
And smothered murmurs ran o'er vale and lea;
Glad groups were gathered of the Maids and Swains,
And multitudes were thronging roads and lanes;
Blithe were the Birds and blossomy the Trees,
Light were the laughs that fluttered on the breeze,
And still the Crowd grew glittering and gay,
As if Life were a Summer holiday.
She from her casement saw the sweeping tide;
Her faithless Lover led another Bride;
And with a piercing shriek, like Maniac's yell,
Into her Father's outstretched arms she fell;
And the old story of a Maiden's wrong
Became a theme for censure and for song.
Then broke upon her, like the lightning's flame,
The startling consciousness of guilty shame;
When from her heart was cast Delusion's guise,
The tears, like liquid fire, rolled from her eyes.
Her love outlived her loss. Oh, icy Hell,
Scooped by a demon, who its depth may tell?
A fever-flush, like a marsh-meteor, came
To her wan cheek; or as a watch-fire's flame,
To tell of inner strife. A year agone
Those blithe Bells should have pealed a Bridal tone,
Till the green vales laughed back their happiness,
And Echo ran with mad deliciousness
From hill to hill, like children shouting blessings
Upon another Pair and their caressings.
Alas! that lovely Maiden, like a ship,
The glad waves dancing to its very lip,
Freighted with prayers and praises, missed her mark
To Life's bright Isle, and foundered in the dark.

Then from the heart of that dishevelled Girl
Love ebbed, and left upon its beach one pearl,
Dearer to her than any lucent gem,
That, sun-like, flames in towering diadem;
The Sunset of her Soul went down the night,
And rose that Baby-star—the one sole light
In all her heaven. Her heart-harp's tragic strings
Vibrated only mournful murmurings
Of the bleak Past, whose Winter-nurtured showers
Blighted Life's sweet embroidery of flowers.
When piped the Robin on the window-sill,
And Frost his magic architecture planned,
And on the panes, with icy fingers, drew
The leafless forests as in silver dew,
She heard those Bell-lips singing from the hill,
A mazéd denizen of Shadow-Land.

THE INSANE GIRL.

The rapid music from her lips leapt forth
Like a Storm's fearful laughter.
What change was this between the Spirit's birth,
And the unspent Hereafter?

The Spirit-bird had left its vacant nest
The cold haunt of the air;
Love's flame had left but ashes in her breast,
And hollow heaps of care.

Upon her face a transient splendour glowed,
Telling her wrong's sad story,
As at the Sunset some rich cloudlet showed
His dying beams of glory.

Love was a myth, and Time a phantom now;
The Unknown was at hand,
As if God wrote it on that pallid brow
With a moonbeamy wand.

Oh! was it but a long angelic trance—
This Soul-sunset, a dream,—
These awe-o'ershadowed eyes—this mazy dance—
This fierce unconscious gleam—

This beauteous imperfection, which no love,
Music, or joy can fill?
Between her and the Sun what shadows move!
But she's quiescent still.

Oh! of the dead Soul would she ever be
A sepulchre divine;
A sunless beach washed by a waveless Sea;
A cold and lightless Shrine?

In the great Spirit-Harp a broken string
Would she for aye remain,
O'er which God's holy finger moves, to bring
Forth harmony in vain?

From out this dark and terrible eclipse,
Prayers flowed like light along,
And, bursting through the portals of her lips,
Gushed floods of early song.

She clasps her hands in prayer, her lips are dumb,
Locked by the spectre, Grief;
Her eyes are a blue Midnight. When will come
The Day-spring of relief?

There sitteth she, like some fair temple grand,
Where once a god was shrined;
While Desolation, with its clammy hand,
Wreathes ivy round the Mind.

Those raven ringlets drooping round her head,
Like a funereal plume,
Wave where the Spirit silently is laid
Within its marble tomb.

No more she lingers by the glassy tides,
The Summer beach along,
Or lists the music from the woods, that glides
In welcomes sweet of song.

What were the garniture of Earth and Sky,
Their beauty and their bloom,
If no immortal, conscious Soul were nigh?
One glorious hecatomb!

But she shall see the worlds in glory globed,
Hear minstrelsy divine,
Behold God's countenance in sunlight robed,
And in His brightness shine.

Soon from her buried heart the stone was rolled;
An Angel stooped to save,
And loosed the bright wings fettered in the mould,
And broke the Spirit's grave.

SCENE IV.—A STORMY NIGHT—COTTAGE IN THE GLEN—MOTHER AND POSTHUMOUS CHILD—RETURN TO REASON—SYMPATHY, AFFECTION, AND FORGIVENESS.

'Tis a sad sight, in Summer's prime to see
The bright Day dying, pierced with the fire-shaft
Of the malignant Storm. The tempest's waves
Had drowned the Sun before his setting time,
The Winds roared, rushing o'er the desolate moor
Like hungry lions which had scent of prey,
And leapt against the Cottage door as if
'Twas hidden there in quiet sanctity;
But every nook and cranny was made fast,
And brightly glowed the fire upon the hearth.
Then came the splash of rain, and loud, without,
The Storm, with his red tongue, was lapping up
The shower that fell in warmth and sweetness down.

A Mother and her Child sat by the fire
Within a lonely room. The little Boy
Cowered by her antique chair, which once had been
Her dear fond Mother's, and in which she died,
But not before she saw her daughter's Soul,
Refulgent, beam again amid its clouds.
Her Father sat within another room,
Perusing the great Book with massive clasps,
The heirloom of the family, to be
His final gift to that dear bright-haired Boy.
This thought perfumed the evening of his days,
Like scented roses in a storm of hail;
For he had found this human Life to be
A gilded bubble or an empty show,
As it floats in the sun or bursts in shade.

He saw in his ingenuous sky-blue eye
The fire which kindled in his own dear Son's,
Like the uplifting of a Summer-cloud
To let Soul-light in luminous glory through,
Ere forth he voyaged to the Isle of Dreams,
Like one who sails to the Hesperides,
In a frail coffin, with Death at the helm.
The Boy gazed kindly in his Mother's face,
Watching the shadows flit, and change, and gleam,
On her pale countenance, still beautiful,
Oracular, and chastened by her woe;
Beholding there the silentness of grief,
Which in her heart was nursed, like a cold worm
Shut softly in a living Rose of snow.

His gentle Soul leapt to his azure eyes,
Like a bright star of radiant mystery
In a May-heaven, all tremulous with dew;
And then his Mother gazed into their depths
So dreamy-beautiful, and read his thoughts
Within those orbs of wonder, dropping tears
Against his fine broad brow. Upon her lap

He drooped his golden head, like a Spring-bud
Shrinking in leaves out of the chilling shower,
And then he looked up very strong and calm.
Before them, o'er the mantel-piece, there hung
The Picture of a tall and handsome Man,
Whose black eyes gleamed with a magnetic flame,
At which the Mother stole a furtive glance,
And wept again. The Boy observed it too,
And strove to hide his own Soul's agony,
Which, like a pent volcano, raged below;
But still he looked up very calm and strong,
Keeping his heart down with a Spirit-chain.
And then he softly clasped his Mother's hand
In his own vine-like fingers, crept beneath
Her mantle's downy folds, as in a nest
Like a bush-rose, beneath the smiling Moon,
With dew upon its petals lightly pearled.
They felt the beatings of each other's hearts
In that delicious blending of still woe.

Then strange thoughts filled the bright Soul of the Boy—
His memory full of all his orphaned state,
His Mother's loneliness and tearful gloom,
And that grand Picture ever smiling down;
And swelled his young heart in his panting breast,
As it could leap out and thrill into wings,
Till the monotonous ticking of the clock
Chimed back his Soul from meditations sad.
He had been thinking of the great, great World,
Its struggles, agonies, and wrecks, and wrongs—
His origin and future destiny;
The pilgrims on the moors, whose piteous wail
Was unregarded by the howling Storm;
The Sailors with no refuge, blown about
The hungry waves which feed on drowning prayers,
And suck the rafter down to which they cling;
The homeless and bereaved, on whom the rain
Beat wildly, like God's frown on helplessness;
And how he lived an isolated life,
In the great aggregate and sum of things.
But he would walk forth from his Mother's yoke,
Each nerve new-strung with fiery energy,
And in each hand some hateful monster grasp,
And swing it round his head in bloody rings,
Conquer the empire of the flesh and sense,
And lift his Mother from the gulf of tears
To some proud pedestal of earthly Joy.
And then he kissed her cheek and pressed her hand,
And at each pressure a fresh gush of tears
Welled to his glorious eyes, and in her Cup
Some honey-drops of Consolation fell.

While gazing at that Picture on the wall,
Sad Memory wandered, like an Autumn wind,
'Mong empty nests and dead leaves of the Past,
Gliding from scene to scene, and joy to joy,
Like the blithe Hummer of the Summer-time,
Through bowers whose sweets the charmer sipped before.
A second time we cannot pluck the Flowers
Of hope, and love, and happiness, and joy;
We gather them, enjoy them, and they die;
As dews that shine like jewels on the grass,
Will melt to water gathered in the hand.
She dreamed again the May of Maidenhood,
When Life's cloud blossomed into rainbow-hopes,
Then how the verdure withered on her path,
The germ lay blighted of a glorious aim,
And Duty fell down from the heights of heaven,
Its bosom pierced, its pinions paralysed,
And all the inner life quenched at the spring.
How the rich goldenness of her love-dreams,
And sunny-sheafed hope-harvestings, like hues,
Faded from off the landscape of her heart,
With Life's last Tragedy, which left her crazed.

Unlike that Passion glowing in the breast
With the warm fervour of an Eastern heaven,
And when it finds the Idol it adored,
Like the Chaldean's, mingled clay and gold,
Is sudden transformed to a Hell of hate;
Or as the Sun which hangs the ruby fruit
Upon the blossomed trees of Araby,
And with its spicy groves perfumes the gale,
Burns in their desolation and decay,
Like a resplendent torch of flame intense
O'er sandy Deserts, whose scorched wrinkled tongues
Pray to the laden clouds in vain for showers;
Her Love was like the faithful Ivy-wreath,
Which clasps the Ruin in its young, green arms,
Whose leaves the lightning's blast has shred away.

Then said the Boy, as if he spoke in prayer,
"My Mother, tell me, as you said you would
Upon some fitting time of rest and quiet,
The story of your life." And in her eyes
He sheathed his ardent gaze, bright as a sword.
The Mother answered him, and bloomed his cheek
With burning kisses, dewed with cooling tears,
Which glittered like a falling rain of light.

And when she told him of her lovelorn wrongs,
Now past and gone like visionary ghosts,
His heart was bent within him like a bow,
And arrowy glances shot out of his eyes,
And his lip quivered on the brink of speech,
But hushed in the submergency of grief.
Then he rose up as ghastly as a corpse,
As if his Spirit fought with airy phantasms,
And he stared wildly on the Picture there,
His little fingers feeling restless forth,
As if to snatch some weapon of revenge,
Like one who feels his being rushing up
To nobler manhood in one Spirit-throb.

At length he wreathed his fond arms round her neck,
And said, "My Mother, tell me where this Fiend
Has fled to covert, and this Boyish arm
Shall be thy sure avenger." "Stay, my Child,"

Said she. "Whom God, in mercy, spares to live
We should not thirst vindictively to slay.
Though Falsehood scatter perfume o'er its lips
To lie away the Truth, and Passion hide
Its viperous fangs beneath the twinkling flowers,
God is not mocked, for He beholds from Heaven
Corruption in its mask of scent and gilt,
As vile as city Churchyards choked with graves.

"The Worm now feeds on that Apostate heart.
Evanished is Life's transitory dream;
He fell from the bright zenith of Ambition,
Lower than those who hated him could wish.
Passion's poor wild-fires died, and pale Remorse
In his heart planted the fierce thorns of pain.
I saw that evil Angel of my Life
In his extremity of agony;
And when I mingled his Affliction's Cup
With Pity's droplets, and forgave him all,
A holy light upon his visage played—
It seemed as if a damnèd Soul beheld,
Through the fire-vapours of the nether Hell,
A glimpse of Heaven and all its flowery plains.
In his torn heart Redeeming Faith still dwelt,
Like a pearl hidden in a shattered shell.
He dewed the feet of God with penitent tears,
Clung to Heaven's ledge with bleeding hands of prayer,
And crawled into its Gate upon his knees.
Do thou forgive him as his God forgave."

SCENE V.—WINTER—THE HALL-KEEPER BY THE RURAL STILE OF TYNEMOUTH CHURCHYARD, WHICH HE REFUSES TO ENTER—LOOKING BACKWARD.

THE Snow, like a great ghostly shroud,
Had buried Summer's flowers,
And with a mournful music moaned
The winds through leafless bowers.
When I beheld that sad Old Man,
His wrinkled cheeks as snowdrops wan;
The golden sunshine of his brows
Had changed to silver moonlight snows,
And whiter were those flaky locks
Than foam upon the Sea-beat rocks,
Besprent with milky waves,
And softer than the mantling moss
That doth some temple's roof emboss,
Or calm of daisied graves.

Falsely to him the world had proved
In all that Life endears—
It snatched away the forms he loved
In childhood's, manhood's years.
No flowers bloomed under Age's snow,
No Summer-time his heart did know,
No sunshine 'mid his tears.

I see him now as I did then—
The most antique of living men—
No child could laugh at him;
Like a Pilgrim faint with travel
Pacing o'er the garden gravel,
Tall, and bent, and slim.

His only Son Death took ere long,
Whose heart was broken with his song,
His Daughter, too, became insane,
A thick cloud brooding o'er her brain,
And lucid but to meet a fate
As terrible and unfortunate.

And yet he stood like some weird Beech,
Amid Life's lost and blighted prime,
His frosted locks beyond the reach
Of the destroying stroke of Time.
Still dreaming of the azure Morn
Of life's delightful Spring,
Like wintry Robin perched forlorn
Upon a bare and blasted thorn,
Its head beneath its wing.

LOOKING BACKWARD.

"I cannot love Death's garden-glooms,"
He said, "though there the Daisy blooms,
And many a pearl-white tablet shows
How deeply, purely loved were they
Who in its flowery arms repose,
As infants in their Mothers' may;
But ah! Life's weary, sobbing wave
Flows ever onward to the grave.

"One whom of all I could not spare,
To Paradise soared unaware;
She was the Love-star of my breast,
Which like a meteor shot from me;
Those honied lips mine own have prest
Like rose-blooms wither silently.
Ah! 'tis no Angel strikes the blow
Which layeth one so worshipped low.

"From me they went each after other
The singing cygnet and swan-mother,
And then the grave—deceitful thing!—
In its green mantle wrapt them round,
As if they lay as warm as Spring,
Instead of cold and Winter-bound.
The worms are glittering for pearls
Among their lavish wealth of curls.

"There sleeps my Son, who climbed to Fame,
And in earth's granite carved his name—
An earnest, sad, child-hearted man—
A Priest of Freedom, smiting Wrong,
Whose brain, like a rich vintage, ran
In gushing streams of glorious Song.
Life's blossom drooped in frost of pain,
A night of thunder without rain.

"Then can I love the Shadow there,
My jewels glittering in his hair;
His garment glimmering with the pearls
I treasured in my heart's deep core,
The grey locks and the golden curls,
The loved ones whom I see no more;
Who sitteth there to strike me down,
My grasp on the Immortal Crown?

"Why should I grope among the glooms?
Hearts do not throb in marble tombs.
I hear a Seraph-melody
Pealing amid those sacred knolls;
I see lean up against the sky
A glorious ladder linked with Souls.
Faith gazeth from the Churchyard sod,
And robes me in the light of God."

TIME FLIES.

And thus that Old Man musèd free,
His furrowed brow upon his hand,
Like old Time with his glass of sand;
Counting slowly, one by one,
In the soft light of memory,
Pearls dropping from Life's rosary
In Age's setting sun;
Dropping in a quick succession
From his passionate possession.
He dreams of those gone from his gaze
Spite of his pleading prayers,
While looking at Youth's faded days
Through Age's silvered hairs.

The step of Time is soft and slow,
As growing grass and falling snow;
Every hour some blossom fadeth
In the hoar-frost which he braideth;
Our Childhood, like some dear-loved coast,
Sinks waves of years below;
Each moment finds some glory lost
Of the bright long ago.
Each year from out the garden-soil
Of sunniest hearts old Time has ta'en
Some fragrant flower-joy for spoil,
And let some sorrow-weed remain.
Still Hope illumes the home of Toil
And whispers, "Pleasure follows Pain."
The storm of Fancy in the calm
Of halcyon Thought subsides—
The one is bloom, the other balm,
To the Soul's passion-tides.
We bask no more on rosy lip,
For pleasures pass with fleetness;
We only gather flowers to sip
Their wealth of honey's sweetness.
A little while that sad Man Old
Will sleep with those he mourned:
Even now towards that resting-place
His lingering feet are turned.
Then, as a labourer sleeps, toil-tired,
Among the meadow-grass and flowers,
And all the woes his brain that fired
Forgets throughout the drowsy hours,
So shall he rest at peace with God,
Beneath the daisied Churchyard sod.

STRUGGLES OF GENIUS.

Yet now his eyes were dim with tears,
As Memory paused to wander back,
And Thought, like snow, flowed down the track,
The verdurous track of earlier years.
His Son had climbed the ghastly peak
Of agony, called Fame,
To write upon its wrinkled cheek
Where eagles build, his name.
High up there in the Angels' ken
He saw him in youth's blood-heat strai
A wonder unto gazing men,
All weak of heart and faint of brain,
As one who sees a daring Boy
In silence move from crag to crag,
Some eagle's callow young to take,
O'er shuddering seas and chasms dim,
As lithe and nimble as a stag;
He watched him with a dizzy joy,
And if he fell, he fell with him.
The sanguine sweat of thoughtful Souls
Brings forth but meagre fruits,
And they who clutch Fame's shallow bol
A grave find at their roots.

Thoughts from the furnace, white and h
In Fancy's whirlwind-car up-caught,
He gave the world for ever;
One of the pale Stars of the Morn
On roseate floods of passion borne,
Like a swan down a river.
As a Bird builds her thatchèd nest
Twig by twig, and hair by hair,
And feathers from her own warm breast,
As it a blissful palace were;
All silently he writ and wrought,
And built his life into his page,
Giving each hour some gift of thought,
Man's only real heritage.
As the high Mountain lifts its finger
Where auroral splendours linger,
Like a golden ring,
He stood bare-browed to catch the Dawn
Of earth's great epochs rolling on,
And hear the Future sing.

There yearned within him an ethereal pow
Which blossomed from the cloud of d
and stormy years,
That Rainbow never born of sun or shower,
Which droppeth down in flowers, radian
and tears.

He lieth 'neath yon grassy sod,
Where the Church lifts its ivied tower,
Wafting prayer-incense up to God,
Like a white Summer-nestling flower.
Its window o'er the forest weaves
A rainbow through a cloud of leaves;
While shouts the Cuckoo o'er the downs,
Or drinks from some bush-hidden strea
Which like a bashful Maiden hides,
To sing alone her love's young dream.
He sleepeth through the quiet hours,
Wrapt in a coverlet of flowers;
In each Bird's song that haunts the glen,
That Old Man hears his voice again.

SCENE VI.—A VOYAGE, A WRECK; A
A SHROUD—ALONE IN THE WORLD.

HIS Daughter went to Italy,
The beauty-cradled, sunny land,

To bask beneath its glorious sky,
  Among its grandeur-ruins stand ;
To cull the snowy lustrous flowers,
In murmurous haunts of Almond bowers,
By many a pillared aisle and portal,
'Riched with dreams of the immortal,—
Where tawny Tiber's billows flow,
And loitering laurels burst and blow,
Which larger brows adorned of yore
Than any now we bow before.
Oh ! Italy was then the blest,
Ere stricken low was Glory's crest ;
Her fiery heart, to Pleasure wed,
Irreverent to her mighty dead,
Still leapeth up like sudden flame,
At memory of her ancient fame ;
Her Patriots and Poets mourn
While leaning o'er her Freedom's urn.

When Eve, sad child ! with half-shut eye,
  Golden-fringed and azure-gleaming,
Smiling up into the sky,
  Of Sunset lay a-dreaming ;
Pale Sorrow oped with silver key
The silent gates of Memory.

Ah ! then she sang, "On Love's fair tree
  A fruit grows we should pass unheeden ;
'Tis bitter as despair can be,
  And makes a desert of Life's Eden.

"If Woman pluck it from the bough,
  With many a thrill of passion burning ;
From Virtue's garden exiled now,
  Within its gates there's no returning.

A glittering sword is o'er it hung,
  Of vengeance, both divine and human ;
It spares the Fiend with lying tongue,
  And falls on weak, defenceless Woman."

Then to her breast she clasp't her Boy,
He and her Father her sole joy ;
Saw swinging wide the garden gate,
Where oft her little Darling sate,
And in the moonlight Thought would trace
Her aged Father's whitened face ;
And in the Stars that faltered forth
The embers glowing on the hearth.
While softest gales of Summer blew,
  She paled like sculpture on a tomb,—
They could not paint the morning-hue
  Upon her young cheek's wasted bloom.

The sails gleamed o'er the sapphire Sea,
  Like shrouds in quiet sleeping ;
The waves were leaping merrily,
  In fiery shadows steeping ;
While gazed she from the peaceful prow,
The westering Moon upon her brow,
  A Stranger unbefriended,
Toward her native isle Elysian
Which, robed in Memory's radiant vision,
  Never seemed so splendid.
The sails upon the idle breeze
  Unto her sad heart moved,
Like rustling foliage of the trees
  Around the spot she loved.

THE COMING STORM.

But ah ! a fiery-wingèd cloud,
  Flashing its plumage, came
Upon the red sky, dusky-browed,
  Like a god's crown of flame.
Above the mast she saw it linger,
Till the Sunset's rosy finger
  Touched its lightning-strings ;
The gorgeous music of the thunder
Gates of silence burst asunder,
  Like the march of kings.
A yellow ring girt cliff and crag,
As dismal as a midnight hag,
And fearful as a gorgeous snake,
That nestles in some thorny brake,
Coiling with many an argent fold
Its gleaming links o'er Ocean old.
She heard the footfall of the Storm
  In darkness on the deep ;
It seemed like some revengeful form
  By Nature's couch of sleep ;
Or like a panther wild, that lies
Beside the gates of Paradise.

THE WRECK.

It was a wild and stormy Night,
  And wintry was the weather,
And awèd Children claspèd tight
  Their little arms together.

"Oh, pray for those upon the Sea,"
  The wailing winds were sighing ;
And on the Beach, so piteously,
  Mother and Child were lying.

Upon the sands the anarch Storm
  Had cast that broken Lily,
And in her arms her Darling's form
  Was claspèd, wet and chilly.

Its golden-curlèd head was prest
  Upon the softest pillow,
And heaved upon her dying breast
  A Sea-bud on the billow.

That Flower-like form with waves was drenched,
  Its saintly beauty blighted ;
That precious Lamp of Life was quenched,
  And could no more be lighted.

Ah ! Death had sealed the Mother's lip
  Whose last kiss was so chilly,
But saved by her own arms a slip
  Of the drowned Mother-lily.

GRANDFATHER'S DARLING—THE LAST LOVE-LINK SHATTERED.

Then that sweet Boy became the Old Man's pride,
For her sweet sake who kissed his lips and died,
The music and the light of his fireside.

His Soul grew one with stars, and flowers, and streams,

His voice like some wild Bird's, when Summer dreams,
In golden copses of the glad sunbeams.

A honied Violet—a blushing Bud,
Whose fragrant beauty thrilled into the blood;
A dream-eyed falcon of the solitude.

Such Children come to us with silver laughs,
On yearning hearts they print their photographs,
Then die—their names their only epitaphs.

Oh! there is heaven in a young Child's face,
Which charms the pure, and overawes the base,
As if an Angel spoke in tones of grace.

When Eve looked in the eyes of her first Child,
What memories pierced her bosom, sin-defiled?
Even fiends seemed purer than an Eve exiled!

On the Boy's cheek was morning's ruby glow,
And in his Soul love's richest overflow;
The youngest Child is wiser than we know.

Each bright May-morning he would gather flowers
To coronal his Grandsire in the bowers,
Then laughed, and kissed his wrinkled cheek for hours.

Oft down the sandy Beach his feet would stray,
Where cold in death his hapless Mother lay,
And o'er that spot he heaped the shells all day.

When o'er the Beach the ruthless tide had swept,
Down to that treasured mound of shells he crept,
And when he found them gone he sat and wept.

Once in the street they met a Millionaire;
The little saint, quoth he, with kindness rare,
"Give that old man some gift, with the grey hair."

One Summer's day he came home ill from school;
The shadows crept across the garden pool,
His pattering steps were slow—his bright eyes dull.

He lingered o'er his Flowers, a joyless thing;
He had not strength to taste the sweets they bring,
Like a poor Butterfly with half a wing.

Within his little chamber's twilight gloom
He lay, and watched the Sunset's dying bloom,
And all his Flowers had lost their rich perfume.

He took a Daisy and a Violet,
And on his breast the fading Flowers he set,
And said, 'We'll die and bloom together, yet.

"Oh! there are Flowers in Heaven which never die,
And sunny blossoms, flinging odours high,
From emerald trees beneath the golden sky.

"There, Grandsire, will I garland thy dear brows
With Lilies whiter than the Christmas snows,
And Rosebuds glistening in shining rows.

"Perchance the Stars we see are Flowers there,
With azure wings, poised ever in the air;
Oh! I should love to cull them, they're so fair.

"But I shall soon that pearly pavement tread,
That grot of gems that glitters overhead,
Beyond the waded River of the Dead.

"There sings a Robin on my window-sill;
Come hither, bird, thou knowest I am ill.
Do Birds die there? I hope they never will.

"Dear Grandsire, you must lay me gently down
In my sweet Mother's grave, with Flowers o'ergrown;
I would not sleep in yon smoke-curtained town.

"I wonder if some loving hand will pile
The shells where last I missed my Mother's smile;
I wish the Sea would but go back a mile!"

The Dawn had kissed the clouds all golden-white,
The trees, like sunny fountains, sparkled bright,
And from them fell the dews like showers of light.

The poor Boy's silken curls fell languidly
About his pale, pale brows, and a soft sigh
Them gently fanned, like balmy melody.

He died like music, or a faint low swell
Of breaking waves, that murmur their own knell,
Singing a plaintive tune, like a farewell.

The Old Man saw from earth a Skylark rise,
Warbling and soaring far into the skies:
Was it his Darling's song in Paradise?

'Tis hard to know your very Name will die,
And not one living link remain on earth
To tell that you have been. That grey Old Man
Still walketh over graves. Life's troubles threw
Their shade across the smoothness of his path,
Like cypresses that gloom a singing stream,
But ne'er disturb the music of its flow.
When last I saw him he sat by a Well,
The Robin's song his contemplations lulled,
And his white, trembling fingers plucked a flower—
A Snowdrop growing up 'mong withered leaves,

Erect and tall, and chastely beautiful,
Like a fair virgin on the Battle-field
Seeking for her Beloved among the slain,
By the pale glimmer of the wintry Moon.

THE WORLD WAS MADE FOR MAN.

METHOUGHT I stood in Paradise,
And saw its waters roll
Beneath the music-dropping skies,
Which seemed to speak a Soul.
The Birds sang in the beams above,
Flowers kissed their parent sod,
And Earth appeared a gem of love,
As glorious as its God.

Morn's windows opened o'er the vale,
The hills, and fruitful lands,
And Dawn drew back Night's ebon veil,
With phosphorescent hands.
Trees shook their blooming locks aloft,
Where golden streamlets ran,
And Angels sang, in music soft,
"The World was made for Man."

The glorious heavens leaned smiling o'er
The babe-world, swathed in bloom,
With sun-robed Angels, evermore,
Man's powers had equal room;
And in his Heart the fire that burns
In breasts of Cherubs ran,
And still it ever upward yearns,
"The World was made for Man."

Earth, like an infant, leapt with joy,
A sinless page its brow;
The Godhead's stamp, without alloy,
Was on its features now;
Oh! guilt that home in Eden spoiled.
The twain wrought 'neath a ban,
But still they sang, as on they toiled,
"The World was made for Man."

God, in their season, sends his snows,
And sun, and ripening showers,
And plenteously the fruitage grows
In orchards, fields, and bowers;
The woodbine climbs the Cottage-door,
And clasps it in its span;
And Nature knows nor Rich nor Poor;
"The World was made for Man."

And though the World is older grown,
And Toil drops by the way,
And Children's bread be turned to stone,
The Truth lives on for aye.
The birds, the flowers, the starry throng,
Bear no despotic ban,
They chant the grand immortal song,
"The World was made for Man."

LIFE'S ANGEL SIDE.

THE Eve steals downward, golden-calm,
From field and garden, bower and brake;
The Flowers pour forth their souls in balm,
And Birds a sweet confusion make.
My Heart is filled with hope again.
I feel whatever may befall;
I only hate the hate of men:
I love the Heart that loveth all.

There are who list to Sorrow's cry,
As to the Bird among the Flowers,
Which wakeneth no responsive sigh,
But lulls to sleep in Pleasure's bowers;
With tears to shed o'er Fiction's play,
But none o'er true Distress to fall,
Who ragged Worth shun on the way:
But there's a spark of good in all.

Oft has the Night crept dewy dark
With starry footsteps o'er the wold,
While I lay sleeping with the Lark,
And heard its warble, music-souled.
And when I see a Heart distressed,
Or starveling Child in Winter's pall,
I cannot pass that aching breast:
I heave a sigh and weep for all.

My brow hath borne full many a storm,
My heart is torn with many a scar,
My face hath lost its childlike form,
And drifteth onward manhood's star;
But, oh! I have not lost the power
Of sympathy at Sorrow's call;
'Tis Pity cheers life's drooping Flower:
God is the Father of us all.

Perchance that heart Life's cross of pain
Amid the ranks of Toil may bear;
To it may cling some earthly stain,
Some fond delusive Syren snare;
But oh, it seemeth better still
Than the Misanthrope's, steeped in gall;
There is enough of doubt and ill;
And there is Mercy yet for all.

Oh, deem it not a vain conceit
That Angel-touches linger long
In Hearts whose chords of music sweet
Vibrate to every noble song;
And there are Souls of sacred fire,
Who like the stars of heaven may fall;
But they belong to God, their Sire,
And in His Heaven there's room for all.

BEAUTIFUL IS FORGIVENESS.

THE purple Eve slid into grey,
And Twilight glided down
O'er meadows heaped with new-mown hay
And fields of golden-brown,
And on the hills the Sunset lay,
Grand as a Monarch's crown.

A group of Girls a-gathering flowers
Homeward at dusk returned,
Among green forest-trees and bowers,
Which o'er the dead Day mourned;
The Bees dreamed of the sunny hours,
And Moths like glowworms burned.

Then little Ethel gently crept,
Heartful of anguish deep,
To her Mother's side, and wildly wept
Tears such as Angels weep;
"Mother," she said, "from School I've kept,
But kiss me ere I sleep."

Her Mother spoke in chiding tone,
Startling poor Ethel's fears;
She crept into her room alone—
But there is One who hears:
Her prayers climbed to God's mercy-throne
Upon a stair of tears.

Oh! there are hearts like Nature's flowers—
Some grow in silken guise,
Others in mail on bleakest towers;
When trampled on, some rise,
And others droop in dewy showers,
Beneath the fairest skies.

Soft as the Ring-dove's plaintive tone
Arose sweet Ethel's prayer;
She prayed not for herself alone,
For others claimed her care—
Her clasped hands lifted to the Throne
While none but God was there.

Ah! like a beautiful Child-saint
That grieving girl reclined,
While moonlight painted pictures quaint
On wall and window-blind;
And, hushed into a slumber faint,
Her Mother filled her mind.

At Morn the balmy breezes bland
Sailed down the yellow sky;
Through honeysuckle-curtains grand
The sun shone sultrily;
And visions of the Better Land
Wrought frescoes to her eye.

Like Sunset's crimson-coloured dyes
Above a snowy peak,
A mournful splendour filled her eyes
And mantled to her cheek:
Her Mother saw with sad surprise
The change she dared not speak.

White grew her lips of dewy red,
Her eyes sunk dim and deep,
The Fever at her Life-stream fed,
Which soon would cease to leap.
And dying she serenely said
"Oh! kiss me ere I sleep!"

Oh! beautiful is Forgiveness,
As honey-dew to flowers—
A Well-spring in the Wilderness,
Begirt with balmy bowers;
It comes the parched Heart to bless
With soft refreshing showers.

AN INNER WORLD THE HEART DOTH OWN.

An inner world the Heart doth own,
Of which the outward is the mirror,
Reflecting Love and Joy alone,
Or images of Grief and Terror;
Dim tracts of Misery's burning sands,
And barren Plains of Sin and Sadness,
Or Gardens bright, with pasture-lands,
And Trees that bear the fruit of Gladness.

The Stars of Thought begem its shrouds,
With an immortal splendour streaming;
And Fancies soar like Summer-birds,
Amid the golden ether gleaming.
Down in the Heart's deep mossy dell
A sacred silver Fountain floweth,
Where oft, as to a mountain-well,
Hope like a stricken wild deer goeth.

And as some Flowers for poisonous use
Distil the dew that fills their chalice,
The Heart extracts a bitter juice
From things of Joy by Pride or Malice.
The Stars a mournful aspect wear,
Seen from an ivy-shrouded Castle,
And Earth is robed in black Despair
When Grief hath made the Soul its vassal.

Bright pencillings the Heart may give
To Earth, with all its dark surroundings,
If it would aye melodious live
With Nature's guileless, gladsome boundings.
There is a Loveliness that fills
The cheerful Soul in hall or alley;
There's sunshine ever on the hills
While we are sorrowing in the valley.

A ROUNDELAY ON THE ROAD OF LIFE.

THERE are many Good Men in the World, I trow,
Who have earnest hearts and willing hands;
If we only look, we can find them now,
Among the ranks of the Working-bands.

There are many Good Men in the World, I trow,
Who, if Merit were all, had worn a crown;
And worthy a wreath is many a brow
Which the heel of Poverty tramples down.

There are many Good Men in the World, I trow,
Whom better we'd love if more we knew,
If we would but less to Mammon bow,
And more to Worth, with its grandeur true.

There are many Good Men in the World, I trow,
Fettered by Custom, and Class, and Creed,
Whom if we could harness to Freedom now,
With Patriot zeal the van would lead.

There are many Good Men in the World, I trow,
Whom if we would aid, as aid we can,
With Sympathy's tender human glow,
Would give to their genius broader span.

There are many Good Men in the World, I trow,
Whom men despise for Opinion's sake,
Who will sit in the light of God's own brow
When the weary Heart has ceased to ache.

TO A GROUP OF WILD FLOWERS.

BOON Flowers that scent my narrow room,
How full of tenderness ye seem!
Diffusing your sweet Souls in bloom,
Like infants in a dream.
As some pale boy or girl weeps o'er
A Mother's gift, who dwells afar,
I weep o'er you, and see once more
Love's image like a star;
Ye waft my thoughts to Nature's fanes,
Green flowery fields, and mossy lanes.

Methinks far from the City's din
I quaff a balm which drowns my woes,
Like a parched honey-fly within
The bosom of a Rose;
While Bacchant-bees are lapsed in dreams,
Their dainty lips with nectar fed,
And every field and meadow seems
A golden glory-bed;
And I forget Life's hope and fear
Are like the falling star and tear.

The honeysuckle clasps the bowers
With feeble arms in Summer's rays,
And with the scent of musky flowers
The borrowed help repays;
The sweetbrier lifteth to the Sun
Its chalice, brimmed with fragrance fine,
Like the most lowly Heart of one
Who prays for dew divine;
In wild and shady nooks and dells
The foxglove rings its spotted bells.

I see again that best-loved Girl
With whom I roved by many a stream—
With daring hand I pull each curl,
Bright as the Sunset's gleam;
And Memory to the Churchyard-Sod,
A mournful Angel, wings to lave
The spot where 'neath the eye of God
Flowers deck one little grave!
They seem to kiss that Infant brow,
Those Daisies white that round it grow.

Ye tell that God and Nature lie
Beyond these smoky, mouldering walls—
That something lives of purity
By woods and waterfalls;
Full of sweet memories of green glades,
And songs of Birds in gardens fair,
Ye droop and die like City maids
In this unnatural air;
Ah, dream ye now of fragrant braes,
As I of Childhood's golden days?

Oh, God! my wild brain rocks and reels
Amid these hundred sword-like spires;
These clanging hammers, shafts, and wheels,
Anvils, and flaring fires.
With plenteous gifts of fruit and bloom
Is Nature's gorgeous banquet spread,
While thousands in this living tomb
Battle and die for bread:
Some weave their shrouds with fingers stark,
And others perish in the dark.

Tower, temple, terrace, to the skies
Lift their proud heads in moonlit rest,
Instead of stars, remorseless eyes
Burn deep into my breast;
Those lips which erewhile sang in school,
Bloated and white with curses move;
And wild hearts seek a Lethean pool,
Which once have throbbed with love:
The River 'neath the bridge doth roam,
And from its black lips churns the foam.

How blanched is every cold, thin cheek
Of those who toil through Childhood's hours!
For hearts so weary, worn, and weak
Have ceased to play with flowers.
While all the joys that Goodness sheds
The lordly rule of Wealth commands;
It cares not for their hearts and heads,
It only asks for "hands:"
From Dawn's blush to the Sunset's close
They count a rosary of woes.

'Tis long since I have seen the Corn,
O'er bloodless fields by labour won;
Or heard the Skylark's song at Morn
Dissolving in the Sun.
The windy lawns, and downs, and woods,
The living grass, and wavering streams,
The dewy scent of hedge-row buds
I only know in dreams;
And in my sad heart's coral cave
The City sobs wave after wave.

My feet pant for the green hill-side,
Robed in the roseate hues of Dawn:
My heart sighs for the argent tide,
In music surging on;
For Sunsets, over wood and wold
Far-crimsoning the purple sky;
And moorlands dipt in dusky gold,
That list the plover's cry;
For mountains steeped in rosy Even,
On tiptoe peering into heaven.

Oh, I would fly from stately halls,
Where dance, and song, and beauty dwell,
To Nature's jocund festivals
In many a hazel-dell.
I'd mount a Steed beside the waves,
And roam the desert wide and wild,
Far from the City's crowds and graves,
Where man is Freedom's child!
Or walk the woodland sacristy,
Great God, in fellowship with thee!

The Swallow knows when spring hath come;
The Violet sips the nectar-dew;
The Birds that sing, the Bees that hum,
Live merrily and true.

But hot tears scorch my fevered eyes,
While Cuckoos shout from grove and glen,
And dingy walls around me rise,
While Roses bloom again:
What Shape ascendeth through the gloom?
Is it a Triumph, or a Tomb?

THE LOADSTAR OF LIFE.

THERE is a Loadstar in my Soul,
Whose glorious radiance dieth never;
O'er Life's deep fire-seas it shall roll,
And gather strength for ever.
It is that I may live to be
A blessing and a balm to others,
In fruit and flowerage like a tree,
To humblest men my brothers.

My Helm-star, and my Pilot-dream,
Above Life's arc a growing splendour;
A Psalm within my heart—a gleam
As Summer sunlight tender.
It is that the Divine may fill
The Soul with Love and Joy exceeding;
And Beauty its soft dew distil
In hearts with anguish bleeding.

It guides me with its sacred light,
Like a Fire-pillar God-like burning;
I worship it by day and night
In many a silent yearning.
'Tis that this singing Eden-Earth—
Love's fountain, where we linger,
May be the home of Faith and Worth,
Heaven's symbol and Joy-bringer.

When Genius shall not bear a ban,
Because its path is bleak and thorny;
When man shall grasp the hand of man,
However brown and horny;
The hardness of the Toiler's hand
Shall be the Honour-badge of labour,
The noblest worn in all the land
For deeds that shame the sabre.

It beaconeth with its hallowed flame
The time when man shall tread on error,
When honest Thought shall bring no shame,
The love of Truth no terror;
Nor, as the Martyr's Soul doth rise
To Heaven from flames and scaffolds gory,
Shall Want and Woe and Sacrifice
Be Merit's path to glory.

I know Perfection is not ours,
But this dear World might much be mended
If we would scatter Joy's sweet flowers
With words of Pity blended;
As when Night's pearly eyelid drops
Refreshing dew on blooms that perish,
The drooping Soul's most fragrant hopes
Love's honey-dew will cherish.

There is a Loadstar in my Soul
Which gilds with Hope my lowly living,
Cheers me like Music to the goal,
Wings to my shoulders giving:
It calmeth with its smile of light
Life's troubled waves of Care and Sorrow
And whispers through the weary Night
Of Sun and Flowers To-morrow.

WOMAN IS THE DREAM OF LIFE

DEAR Woman is the dream of Life,
Adorned with every winning art,
As Mother, Daughter, Sister, Wife,
She melts the Soul, she charms the Heart
Without her, what were lordly Man?
A rainless cloud—a fruitless tree—
A world without a sun—a plan
That ever incomplete must be.
Her fostering care, devotion, love,
Seem inspirations from above.

In Childhood's hour beside her chair
She calls each fragile form;
She clasps our tiny hands in prayer,
Safe-sheltered from the storm.
Yet Man, ungrateful Man, the dart
Of falsehood hurls with skill;
And when he's won a Woman's heart
He seeks its love to kill.
Her lot is to be sad, though pure;
To sigh, to suffer, and endure.

Oh, Mothers of a race unborn,
'Tis yours to speak those grand decrees
That herald in the Promised Morn,
The waiting world's Hesperidès.
Ye are the moulds of Heroes strong,
Who guard and glorify our Isles;
The Seas in song shall roll along
Beneath the splendour of your smiles.
The Beautiful and Good shall reign,
And Sinless Eden bloom again.

WHISPERS OF TRUTH.

I WOULD have the words sculptured
In Stars on the Sky,—
"Prize Health, Life, and Fortune,
For quickly they fly.
Grasp Wisdom's sheet-anchor,
And never let go:
If all's lost but Honour,
You'll rise from the blow."

I would have the words graven
In Flowers on the Earth,—
"Religion and Duty
Are one with true Mirth.
Remember, in Mercy,
A word or look given
May lead back the erring
To Virtue and Heaven."

I would have the words painted
In temples of Fame,—
"Advice softly spoken
Is better than blame.

The lightning may sparkle
  Awhile on the shoots;
But tender rain-droppings
  Creep down to the roots."

I would have the words printed,
  In Dewdrops so bright,
On Lilies and Roses,
  That laugh with delight,—
"Speak kindly to Woman,
  Bid not her tears start,
She's Pain's soothing Angel,
  The Star of the Heart."

I would have the words blazoned
  On Banners unrolled,—
"The furnace of Trouble
  Burns dross, but leaves gold.
The Sower he dieth,
  But thousands are born,
Who gather the Harvest,
  And sing o'er the Corn."

THE POET'S GARDEN OF FLOWERS.

I HAVE a little Garden-plot,
  With flowers that runneth o'er,
A pleasant bower, a quiet spot,
  Anear my Cottage-door.
Each blossom bears a Poet's name,
  Of high or low degree;
And whether crowned or not by Fame,
  They all are dear to me.

Peep at my gems in rich array,
  With all their varied dyes,
While yet the golden breath of May
  Swims through the azure skies.
They laugh and dance, like boys and girls,
  And quaff the sunny air;
And dewdrops shine, like glistening pearls,
  Amid their tresses fair.

The Tulip, with a tender grace,
  Yet grand in regal gloom,
Smiles on the Lily's angel-face,
  The Violet's glossy bloom.
Roses, Thistles, and Shamrocks grow
  In friendship side by side;
And Dahlias with Daisies blow,
  Without one touch of pride.

Some of my Garden-Flowers I love,
  And many I admire:
Some wear a hue like Heaven above,
  And some a crown of fire;
And some are soft, and sad, and sweet,
  And some are cold and stern:
Some smile like Infants at my feet,
  And others Sun-like burn.

Like starry jewels in their nooks
  Some raise their lovely heads,
And some will grow by water-brooks,
  And some in *stony beds*:
Some float their Lives away in streams,
  And some on Ruins grow;
And there's a sturdy flower that gleams
  Amid the Winter's snow.

And whether in their flowery prime,
  Or in their opening bud,
They all rejoice at Singing-time,
  And all are fair and good.
Like them should be the Human Flowers,
  United in good-will;
And, dying in their fragrant bowers,
  Leave sweeter memories still.

THE LOVER'S CHOICE.

SOME love a Face of charming grace,
  A fairy form of Angel-beauty;
But for my part give me the heart
  Inspired by candour, love, and duty.
A homely look is like a book,
  Plain outside, but within it
Are gems of thought by Wisdom wrought,
  A higher worth to win it.

Some love a Face of marble grace,
  No inner fount revealing:
No joy or grief, however brief,
  Nor gush of warmer feeling.
The Moonlight's glow o'er fields of snow
  To some minds may be tender;
But give to me the Sunlight free
  That gilds the Flowers with splendour.

Some love a Face of smiling grace,
  Bestowed on all at pleasure;
But Love lies deep, and oft must weep.
  Oh! win that sacred treasure.
While killing Time, Time steals our prime,
  And strength we need in sorrow:
The darkest Night is turned to light
  When Love shines on the morrow.

PITY'S TEAR.

WHAT drop of glory from the Sky
With dewy lustre fills the eye,
  To Friendship dear?
And plants within the withered breast
That emerald Flower the heart loves best?
  'Tis Pity's tear.

Oh! say, when Life, once young and fair,
Sinks with its load of toil and care,
  What most doth cheer?
The gem which lights the darkest lot,
Reblooms the cheek, and gilds the cot,
  Is Pity's tear.

Yes! there be hearts in grief that pine,
Souls with celestial fire that shine,
  'Mid want and fear,
Which might rejoice, if we'd befriend,
And on the Angel-wing ascend,
  Of Pity's tear.

It perforates the granite Heart,
Whose healing waters gushing start
In Deserts drear;
And broken Spirits, bleeding balm,
Kneel prayerful, penitent, and calm,
Through Pity's tear.

If Angels sought 'mong earthly bowers
One crystal drop to 'dew the Flowers
In Eden's sphere,
From trembling eyelids flowing free,
That pearl of pearls would surely be
Soft Pity's tear.

KINDNESS IS THE HEART'S BEST JEWEL.

WHERE the Red-Sea waves through Deserts rolled
A Widow once mourned by her Husband's tomb,
Her dwelling she made by the grassy mould
Where he lay, and the wild flowers wept perfume.
Oh, sorrow had entered her Spirit's core,
And drunk the dew of Life's beauty up;
As Death's grim Angel the world passed o'er,
He dashed in the dust Love's brimming cup.

The Sunset gilded the western Sky,
While the Widow sate sad as a sighing shell;
Two Storks were teaching their young to fly,
And one little weakling, wounded, fell.
With sweet compassion her Soul was stirred,
As the heart of a Lily-bell with dew;
And she bound the limb of the wounded Bird
With a healing gum, and away it flew.

One Summer's eve, as the Sun sunk slow,
The Widow sate watching the Flowers tear-sprung,
And she saw a Stork on the air skim low,
Till over her head it gently hung:
It dropped from its beak a precious stone,
Which fell in her lap, and it flew away;
The radiant gem with effulgence shone,
And luminous made the night as day.

Oh, heal the pang of the wounded breast,
Ere Hope's sweet blossom its leaflets fold,
And out of Life's thorns some Floweret blest
Will lift its beautiful crown of gold;
From the Spirit's crushed and broken strings
Joy will flash up in a hymn to thee,
And bring to thy Soul on its Bird-like wings
A blessing more precious than gems can be.

THE GENTLE DEW.

THE sweet Dew is a blessed thing,
Where'er it droppeth down;
It beautifies the wreath of Spring,
And comes the Earth to crown.

It creepeth in the waking buds,
Insensibly and still,
And maketh fragrant all the Woods
Whose leaves with Music thrill.

It falleth in the silent Night,
On Summer's field and bower,
And welcome is the Morning's light
To every Bird and Flower.
Thus cometh Love, unheard, unseen,
But with a power divine;
And Life it maketh young and green,
And fragrant as a Shrine.

The Heart of sorrow feels its power,
And hails Joy's welcome Sun;
And through the gently-falling shower
Bright Hopes shine one by one.
When the Eternal Morning breaks
Athwart Life's grief and gloom,
The Soul at Love's bright touch awakes
In everlasting bloom.

FATHER, STEER THIS WAY.

OUT of the Harbour sailed a Boat one afternoon,
Gaily gliding down upon a placid Sea,
And the hidden Bird of Joy sung its blithest tune
In the leaping hearts of Pleasure-seekers three.

A Father at the helm sat, with his Girl and Boy;
They entreated him to land them on a little Isle;
And they made the Island ring with silver shouts of Joy,
While he sailed out to Sea an hour to beguile.

While distant from the Shore, a hurricane set in,
A shrouding fog hung o'er the Ocean heavily;
And he heard his Children crying o'er the breakers' din,
"Oh! Father, steer this way; we are waiting for thee!"

In the stern of the Boat he stood up strong and pale;
Blackly gloomed the fog, the Nightmare of the Sea;
And he steered towards the Voices heard above the gale,
"Oh! Father, steer this way; we are waiting for thee!"

When through the murk and surf he gained the lonely Isle,
They leapt into his arms—his little Darlings two;
As they nestled in his bosom, they said with a smile,
"We knew that you would come, and we waited for you."

Oh, now those Children sleep in the Island of the Dead,
And their Father still is groping through Life's blinding sea;
But he hears two Cherub voices singing overhead,
"Oh! Father, steer this way; we are waiting for thee!"

THE POET'S BRIDE.

A CITY Maiden is my Bride—
But virtue may flourish in towns, I ween,—
She is as fair and pure by my side
As the Lily that grows on the downs, I ween,
No silken snood, with jewels set,
Shines on her brow serene, I trow;
And though she wears no coronet,
Of Lady-land she is the Queen, I trow.

Oh! though no Rose-bud crown doth press
Her pearl-pale brows where Hope sings, I ween,
Her hair hath the golden glossiness
Of the Butterfly's velvety wings, I ween,
Her lips are like the strawberry-bud,
Cheeks like the Summer-sunned peach, I trow,
And, sweet as the Wind-flower of the wood,
She leaned to my lowly reach, I trow.

When first I called that Maiden mine,
Our dwelling was humble and poor, I ween;
But there was a treasure of Love divine
In the jewel our bosoms bore, I ween.
The future Angel of my Life
On her task of beauty came, I trow;
My Guardian-Spirit, my own sweet Wife,
In duty and love the same, I trow.

Life's waves but lift me nearer Heaven,
In every storm of care, I ween;
She is the link that God has given,
To snatch my Soul from despair, I ween;
The Star of her Love grows never dim,
Her virtues as flowers are bright, I trow;
And on their hues the Seraphim
Might gaze with a thrill of delight, I trow.

A dark World it has been to thee,
Wasted and weak is thy breast, my Love,
And our little Bird left thy gentle knee,
For the cold grave's halcyon nest, my Love.
The Linnet sings in the golden broom,
The Lark in the azure sky, my Love;
Their songs will cease in the wintry gloom,
Affection never can die, my Love.

SONG OF THE CORN-REAPERS.

WHAT is the Song which the Reapers sing,
Tossing the waving Sheaves over their shoulders?
"Golden-eared wealth to the world we bring,
To gladden the hearts of the merry beholders;
Each scythe-sweep leaveth a glorious gap,
While unto the Flowers the Birds are calling,
And the fields, like Danae, spread their lap
For the golden shower of Corn-sheaves falling."

What is the Song which the Reapers sing,
Their tawny arms strung, like rhymes, together,
While down in a Morris-dance they fling
The ripe yellow reeds in the sunny weather?
"This is the wealth which makes no poor—
This is the gold no heart that breaketh—
Its sunshine brightens the Cottage-door,
And hushes the tumult which Hunger waketh."

What is the Song which the Reapers sing?
"Lift up thine eyes, thou Pilgrim of sorrow;
Though grief to thy bosom may wintrily cling,
It ripens the Harvest of Joy for to-morrow.
Sing glory to God for the bounty given,
Widows and Orphans in garments of sable,
The Banquet is spread by the Lord of Heaven,
And welcome are ye to your Father's table."

What is the Song which the Reapers sing,
Homeward returning with Wains full-laden?
"As ye have sown in your Life's early spring,
So shall ye gather, oh Young Man and Maiden."
Lo! Age sits under a fruitful tree,
In the pastoral region of blithe Sheep-keepers,
And he talks to a little Child at his knee,
Of the beautiful Chant of the sun-browned Reapers.

THE GOLDEN RULE OF SUCCESS.

TO A BROTHER POET.

IF thou wouldst see the amaranthine Rose
Grow in its native air on summits cold
Like an ethereal gem dropped from the robe
Of the ETERNAL, odourless and pale,
Climb up to where the Avalanches wreathe
Their glorious coronet, and Terrors dwell,
And Silence is a Hallelujah grand.
'Tis Earnestness that scales the Alps sublime,
To thunder at an Empire's gates, or conquer thrones.
It makes Colossus while the Pigmies gaze
With trembling on its lofty brow of flame,
Mouldeth Perfection by refined degrees,
And makes the Canvas and the Stone immortal.
'Tis Nature's law of progress. When she wills
A Star, she takes the changeling to her breast,
And patiently she rounds it to an Orb
Of dazzling radiance in azure shrined;
Nurses the crystal Spark for centuries;
Looks once an Age upon its growing light,
Until it glows in Heaven's rich diadem.

All round the Globe her influences run
Before she takes a Daisy in her hand;
The soil is laid—the germ lies lambent there,—
She breathes upon it and it leaps to Life;
But in her secret Studio she toils
To build Perfection with a crown of praise.
The little Life sleeps like a cradled Babe,
Watched by a Mother's never-wearied eye;
And winds that wreck the proudest barks afloat
Blow o'er its nest in hurricanes in vain;
And Winter, with his spears of icicles,
Can never launch one in its tiny heart.
She sends the Spring with all her vernal grace,
To be the handmaid of her high designs,—
To mix the colours of the rainbows, steeped
In hues which paint the plumage of the Birds
Of Paradise—the elixir of dews
And honey—light of Sun and Moon and Stars;
Lavishing all her diligence and skill
On the transcendent shape of one fair flower.
She warms it with the sunshine of her smiles,
Blooms it with kisses glowing sunnily,
With care as great as when she moulds a Star,
Until the little Infant-bud leaps through
Its trammelage, and laughs up at the Sun,
No petal crushed of all its pearly crown,
Each crimson streak and golden tint complete,
A type of elegance and divinest grace;
Upon its delicate and emerald stem,
A pure and perfect Flower of loveliness.
All Nature's glowing forms in earnest move,
And palpitate with inner energy,
From the refulgent Sun, whose rosy beams
Touch clouds to thunder, to the wondrous things
Whose Hearts beat in a water-drop with Joy.
The Ants and Bees accumulate their stores,
In elfin granaries which overflow;
The Birds their nests build underneath the eaves,
In bush, or tree—a twig, or hair, at once,
And day by day, until a Home is made
For their Spring-tenderlings, with dauntless toil,
That casts the triumphs of all human skill
Into the shade. Thought-deeds like Nature's are:
First Life, then Seed, and Stem, and Blossom, then
The full-blown Flower, and Fruit to crown the whole.
And he who voyages the Sea of toil,
In patientness and hope enduring all,
Amid the mutinies of jealous foes,
And clouds which Earnestness to splendour turns,
In its pure Alchemy of deathless fire,
Still holding on 'mid Danger to the helm,
Shall see the green branch of some cherished Dream
Float on the waves of stern reality,
And find a New World when the morning dawns,
Like proud Columbus o'er the western waves.
We Work and Win, ay, though we never gain
The object we have sought. 'Tis leaf by leaf
The Poet's garland grows, as grain by grain
The little Insect builds its Coral-reef,
Till o'er the surging tops of waves it shoots,
Like a resistless rock set in the Sea,
Dismantling stately Vessels of their pride.
O'er wider surfaces our earnest Deeds
Diffuse themselves than we are wont to dream.
The trickling Rill from the secluded Spring,
Scarce higher than the violets on its brim,
And waveless as an infant's crystal brow,
Swells to a Rivulet, which fed by streams
That leap in sunny light out of the heart
Of the green hills, bearing heaven's golden seal,
And showers that shudder from the thunder's mane,
To find a softer pillow on its breast,
Becomes a River flowing calm and grand.
An earnest Thought, embodied in true words,
Dropped in the world's heart, fructifies apace,
Like seed that falleth from a wild Bird's wing
Beside a Desert well, and pushes forth
On every side its branches clad with bloom,
Where the tired Birds their wearied pinions rest,
And Pilgrims sit beneath its cooling shade.
The Truth thus scattered grows, takes root, and flowers,
Bears rich celestial fruit and waving plumes,
And with Briareus' arms enclasps the world.
When planted by Love's sweet and living well,
Souls feel its power, and kindle into zeal,
And eat its Fruit, which strengthens more than Wine,
Daring to meet all Terrors for its sake:
The Martyr's shroud of fire, the Patriot's chain,
That clasps the frail arm that could shake a Throne.
They were in earnest who of Eld were first
To break from bonds and buckle on the brand;
Who made the plumes cower on the helm of Wrong,
And traced immortal Thought on Prison-walls;
Who plunged into a terrible Sea of Hate,
And ransomed from the black abyss the pearl
Which shall outlive yon young and peerless Stars.
They wore stern Earnestness like Warrior-helms
Whose names are carved upon the granite heart
Of Time, emblazoned up there in God's sight,—
Whose deeds Posterity will reverence,
And Fame immortalize. The earnest Soul,
By some fine fascination, sways all hearts,
And bends untoward Destinies like flames
Borne by the winds across a Prairie fired.
It stirs the blood of millions. At its Voice
The World stands still to catch its faintest echo.
As the rude Potter's wheel flings up the clay
In forms of rare device, whose shapes excel
The Pencil's grandeur and the Chisel's grace,
The earnest Will can mould all earthly Fates
And make them glorious with its living fire.
Thus were the mighty race of Britons, led
From barbarous woods and caves, with painted skins,
Yet rolled the tide of the Invader back

To distant shores. Thus were those Sons of Song
Whose bright feet trampled Darkness till it glowed;
Who burned their Lamps throughout the dreary Night
Above the wave-like roofs of Cities vast,
Like little Beacons shining o'er the Sea;
Who rose untainted 'mid the Moral fen,
Like broad-leaved lilies on a putrid Lake.
Be thou in earnest, and Success will stand
Upon the threshold of thy Soul's design,
With outstretched hand to crown thy enterprise;
And the gay World will stop its dizzy dance
At Pleasure's masquerade to hear thy voice
Lift up its thunder in a warning tone.
Be thou in earnest; Envy's night-dipt Lies,
Which challenge thy luminous Fame, shall drop
Into their black ravine. Baffled—not conquered;
Truth's pillow ever is the Desert-stone,
Its dream the Ladder whereon Angels lean,
To whisper to the heart the help of Heaven.
Be thou in earnest in thy Soul-born Song,
Heedless what time the envious bullet flies
To ruffle thy bright plumage on the twig,
And hurl thee down among the withered leaves;—
The lowliest Singing-Bird is never spared
For meal or pastime to some human-fiend.
Sing thou to God and to thy glorious peers,
And let the hungry Cormorants feed at will.
Now thou art caught in Verse's silken toils,
And tread'st the starry paths of Poesy,
With Gordian arts they'll suck thy youthful leaves,
As Bees from Laurel-flowers sip poisonous juice,
And make thy Fame a thorny coronet.
Work on, and follow to her secret haunts
The Joy-voiced Nymph with flowery fillet crowned.
Seek out some unpathed Ocean of true Thought,
And thou shalt touch the hearts in hut and hall.
The fires thou kindlest on the earnest Shrine
Of thine own yearning Spirit shall not die,
And some poor Pilgrim there will worship yet,
And feel that thou art worthy of his homage.
Be thou in earnest, and the World is thine;
'Tis this that puts on Victory as a robe,
Binds sheaves of Sceptres, gathers glorious Crowns.

THE SOMNAMBULIST.

'Tis early Morning, see the Crowd
Is gathering thick and fast,
Around a Mansion high and proud,
A relic of the Past.

A Maiden on the ivied Tower
Is standing in a Dream:
Her shadow, like a Summer-flower,
Reflected in the Stream.

Her hands with Roses fresh are filled,
With which she wreathes her hair.
Her Father looks: his heart seems stilled.
Her Mother breathes a prayer.

She climbs up to the Turret steep,
Where only lichen clings:
Each sense wrapt in unconscious Sleep,
She walks, and talks, and sings.

Hush! hush your breath, ye murmuring throng,
Till she the stair descend.
Oh Angels! listen to her song,
In Peril's path befriend!

Behold her now, ye shielding Saints,
In all her half-robed charms:
Towards her couch she glides and faints,
Caught in her Mother's arms.

Alas! how many Maidens fair
Are walking in a Dream,
To wake with shrieks of wild despair,
And plunge into the Stream.

THINKING IN ABSENCE OF HER I LOVE.

Go to my Love, thou wild Wood-rose!
A symbol of her grace thou art;
Her round, young cheek, like thine it glows,
Love's dew-drop folded in her heart.

Go to my Love, thou Lily fair,
And the white Wind-flower, chaste and free!
Her bosom hath two gems as rare,—
Love's purity and constancy,

Shine on my Love, thou veilless Star,
So softly silvering through the air!
And, though o'er cruel Seas afar,
Our Souls may blend while gazing there.

Sing to my Love, thou sky-ward Bird,
To whose rapt breast rich song is given!
Tell of the strains by Angels heard,
And waft my Darling's thoughts to Heaven.

PLAINT OF THE YOUNG POET'S WIFE.

The great World's grudged applause, my Love,
Is colder than the snow;
Yet here thou Sphinx-like sittest
Beneath the shade of Woe.
Thy Flower of Life consumeth
In ashen grief away,
And the moist, white Lily lieth
On thy cheek as cold as clay.

Under the Night thou weepest,
Like a purple bell-flower lowly;
And thy fire-steeped thoughts and visions
Leap alive to Melancholy.

The Future quickeneth in thee,
  Like a child that longs to cry;
And thy throbbing pulse beats slowly,
  Like a Planet's in the Sky.

I hang my love around thy heart,
  Like a glory-haloed Moon;
I sing for thee as sings the Bee
  Unto the Flower of June.
No Idol have I but thy love;
  No Heaven have I but thee;
And which of all the tuneful Nine
  Would change their lot with me?

Unclose those clouded lids, my Love;
  Dawn on me Eastern eyes;
Awake to Love's high chivalry;
  Lord of my heart, arise!
Oh! plough not up thy young, green heart;
  The leaf of Life soon seres;
And thou may'st in thine anguish reap
  A harvest all of tears.

Sweet music flutters from thy heart,
  Like Singing-birds of May,
And soareth upwards to the Sun,
  And dieth there away,
When jewelled fingers turn the leaves
  All fragrant with thy sighs,
Ah! who will weep that he who wrote
  Thus like a Martyr dies?

THE SOWER OF TRUTH.

STRONG Heart! in Faith's bright Sunrise keep,
Thou art the mould of Earth's divinest years:
Sow well the seed, although it be in tears;
  The World the fruit shall reap.

Discharge in hope thy sacred trust,
Thou may'st not see the Spirit-harvest grow;
But o'er the ripening grain God's breath will blow
  When thou art in the dust.

SWEETS AND BITTERS.

THOUGH tears sometimes our Hopes may dash,
  As July showers the Roses strew,
Grief's silver wings in rainbows flash,
  And darkness droppeth down in dew.
Oh! why should Soul be shut from Soul,
  Like precious caskets locked and barred?
If we the cloud from Self unroll,
  The Heavens will glitter glory-starred.

The World is often vain and cold:
  A wasted shrine seems Friendship fair;
Love is betrayed, and Truth is sold,
  And Constancy is a jewel rare.
Nectar of Hebe, holy Love,
  Flower of Paradise, gentle Truth,
Would make this Earth like Heaven above,
  One sweet Arcadian home of youth.

Some only come when shines the Sun,
  Like Birds that love the Summer-sky;
And when the golden beams are done,
  Away to other climes they fly:
But there be hearts that closer cling,
  When wintry tempests round us roar;
And when the sunny hours take wing
  With Love they charm us more and more.

SCOTLAND'S GLORY, ROBERT BURNS.

RECITED AT A MEETING TO CELEBRATE THE POET'S ANNIVERSARY.

WHEN Nature made her Burns she broke the mould,
And flung the fragments in Oblivion's wave,
That nevermore another brow might wear
The crown and coronal of pathetic Song.
He was the tender Northern Nightingale,
Which harbingered the advent of the Dawn
Of dewy sympathy in Scottish lore—
The midnight Bird of Sorrow and of Song;
And the wild witchery of his melting notes
Will thrill for ever in the human groves.
With bosom prest against the blossomed thorn,
He sang his Soul out in the tearful dark,
Until all Heaven was moved to pitying love,
And caught him up into its blessed arms;
And while it yet was night, he saw the day
Rise on another world to Angels' songs.
Oh! he was Scotia's true and faithful son,
The Laureate of the People and of Love;
His flute was fashioned of her mountain reeds,
And tuned to a simplicity sublime
Among the broom and birks, and daisies dear,
Which spread their golden bosoms to the Sun
In modest frills of snow. From these he learned
Those thoughts which he immortalized in fire,
And sweet delicious honey-rills of Song.
Around the Parian column of true Thought
He wreathed the garland of his Fancy, sunned
In all the splendour of the Poet's beams.
He was the Sun of Song, which God hung up
To be a symbol and a sign for ever
In the broad heavens of eternal Fame.
He was the Prince of pathos and of passion—
A fiery pulse beat in his honest heart
To the soft melody of smiles and tears.
No buttered lips, no Puritanic tears
Had he who hung his wild Harp in the winds,
And when the lightning-fingers touched its strings,
Its thunder-music shook the world of hills.
His not the meek blood of Melancthon's heart,
But the strong, sensuous, thrilling, leaping swell
Which tided in immortal Luther's veins.
His Peasant's garb shrined a God-loyal Soul;
But none could bind his large Titanic mind
To the Procrustès bed of narrow Creeds,
And fix his feet in the compressing shoes
Of old opinions and exploded forms.
He was the Incorruptible of Song!
None but a true God's-noble would have raised,
In the rouged faces of Wealth's titled drones,
The flag of our despised Humanity,

With Want and Suffering ever on his trail,
Like hungry hounds that track a bleeding deer.
He flattered not the pageantries of Wealth;
But his proud Bark, that might have anchored safe,
With a few scented phrases, from the Storm,
Like a strong Sea-bird ruffled its white wings
In Heaven's pure air, with radiance silvered o'er.
He told the Rich, the Poor had also Souls
Dearer to God than all the jewel-sheen
That sparkles in the diadems of kings.
Fain o'er his Sorrows would I draw the veil,
And fling the mantle of kind silence o'er
Our frail humanity. He feels no more
The agonizing pangs which broke his heart;
But when I quaff those streams of music born,
I cannot all forget that they have flowed
Through the deep channels ploughed by Suffering's tears.
Those who have brands, red-heated, in their Hate
For erring mortals, may their tortures use:
I would not pelt an Outcast with the snow—
I would not frown upon a Poor Man's Child—
Misfortune ne'er shall have a kick from me.
He never sought Perfection for a Bride,
Nor paid he homage to her magic charms,
Like the vain girl who wooed the Belvidere,
On the Apollo gazing night and day—
Strewing rich flowers o'er the mosaic steps—
The Statue folding in a muslin veil
Of Ind, with fringe of gold, and raving, died!
His warm outbreathings were by Truth inspired—
A rough, unpolished, genuine Child of Song.
Few granaries there be without some husks,
Few gardens without weeds. Oh! where's the man,
Who, placed as he, more than a man had been?
Oh! glorious Burns a nobler sceptre sways,—
O'er a dominion which no earthly King
Can e'er inherit from ancestral Sires—
Than he of Eld called to an empire's throne
From fields whose loam he wrinkled with the plough.

THE POET'S DREAM OF THE SYRENS.

WHILE the pale Morning-Star
Poured out its Soul afar,
In dreamy light along the Heavens azure-veined,
And where the Nightingale
Had sung her plaintive tale,
Like a lovelorn Maid, Enchantment, musing, reigned.
The Sun, like Heaven's High-Priest,
Walked up the gorgeous East,
To consecrate the banners of the Day with golden hands;
While from Earth's votive shrine
An incense as divine
As rose from ancient Altars misted the green lands.
Cloud-columns seemed to rise
To Music's symphonies,
While the Poet lay in Lilies of repose;
And honey-drops of Love,
Like blessings from above,
Crept into the core of his Martyrdom's Fire-Rose.
As on the heaving tide
Of the bosom of a Bride
He slept, and drifted out in a skiff of Dreams
With the speed of light,
By Islands green and bright,
And diamond-builded portals, whence the sunlight streams.

As if on Eagle's wings,
He passed Day's flaming springs
Exultingly, to climes with perfect beauty filled,
Where Genius reared her home
'Neath the cerulean dome,
And Goodness every heart like strains of music thrilled;
Where on the Sacred Mount
Flowed Truth's immortal fount,
Ripened every Flower around the spot that grew,
Radiated from each Star,
Sparkled in the Moon's pearl-car,
And robed the Universe in purity like dew.

Came six winsome Syrens—
Where the Poet lay,
Like fairy Children trooping,
Robed in colours gay,—
To his Bower came singing
Through the Summer-noon.
Their rosy footsteps dancing,
To a pleasant tune.

One was dainty Pleasure,
Never to be scorned,
With a glittering tunic
And Flower-wreath adorned.
Like a golden Butterfly,
Trippingly came she,—
Like a shell-borne Venus
Rising from the Sea.

Like a Spirit gliding
Out of Paradise;
All the air was glory
With her sunny eyes;
Pearls and diamonds glimmered
In her glossy hair;
She was like a Vision
Of the starry air.

"I have spread the Banquet;
Come with me," she said;
"With silver shining Lilies
I have strewn my bed."
Then the Poet answered,—
"Painted Hag art thou;
Wreaths of hellish Scorpions
Dangle from thy brow."

Came another Syren,
  Like a Summer-dream,
Down the glory-glimmer
  Of a white moonbeam.
"Ah!" she said, "I bring thee
  Heaps of shining Gold,
Pearls from caves of coral,
  Gems from mines untold"

"Go, thou painted Syren,
  Wealth," the Poet cried;
"Such a yellow Demon
  Shall not be my guide.
Tears of wailing Orphans
  Are thy boasted pearls;
Crushed hearts are the jewels
  Shining in thy curls."

Then came Ambition,
  Grandly mailed and glaived;
From his gleaming helmet
  Plumes of splendour waved;
Pointing with his finger
  Higher, ever higher,
To a Wreath of Glory,
  Like a crown of fire.

Said the Poet sternly,—
  "Go! god-crocodile,
Like those in the Temples
  Worshipped of the Nile;
Thou art the grim Python,
  With the poisoned dart,
And thy wingèd arrows
  Pierce Apollo's heart."

Like a Star-beam golden,
  Came one to his bower,
A rose-mouthed, charming Syren
  Of bewitching power;
Pinions to her shoulders,
  Fringed with crimson flame
Like a flashing Meteor,
  Brilliantly came Fame.

From the Isles of Hesper
  Came she, crownèd grand,
Asphodels and marigolds
  Held in either hand;
Her Sky-music chanting
  Like a silver rain,
Like a fiery phrensy
  Wheeling round his brain.

He said,—"Deceitful Syren,
  All thy wrecks I know;
Hang thy laurel-garland
  O'er thy graves, and go.
Song my Soul beguileth,
  Like a Sailor's glee,
To my Labour keeping
  Lowly melody."

Came a joy-voiced Syren
  To the Poet's side,
With a Wreath of Myrtle
  Crownèd like a Bride,
With a sister Syren
  Gliding hand in hand—
They were Love and Poesy,
  Beautiful and bland.

And his heart within him
  Leapt up to their smile,
For his tirèd Spirit
  Now had found an Isle;
And he said—"Oh, bear me,
  Beauteous Syrens twain,
And Immortal portals
  Back shall fly amain."

Then the Poet seemed to pass
  O'er a crystal Sea of glass,
To the Golden Shore of pearls by Infinity;
  And Angels with white wings,
  Swept their Harps' bright strings,
To his Spirit soaring upward merrily;
  Over azure streams and bridges,
  Over pinnacles and ridges,
Upon the snowy plumes of cherubimic wings,
  Over mountains olden,
  In their armour golden.
Like the glorious shapes of stern barbaric Kings;
  Transported to the regions
  Of immortal legions,
Where the Spirits of the Great sung in a jocund band,
  Bathing in the Beautiful,
  The Blissful, and the Dutiful,
With everlasting Faith, and Aspiration grand.

THE THREE DOVES: TRUTH, TEMPERANCE, AND PEACE.

TO H. G. ADAMS, THE LAUREATE OF PEACE.

A WHITE Dove, from the gateway of the East,
With hushed wings, straightway passed the haunts of June
To the dim town. There, by a lattice, lay
A moon-pale, dream-eyed Girl, with golden curls
Wreathed with a few faint rose-buds, blown about
By airs ambrosial from the honied South.
The radiance rich of morrows fresh as Spring
Shone on her fair brows, like a halo-crown.
Her Soul was full of splendid futures, Dreams,
God-loveliness, and music all unsung.
She was a mystic Daughter of the Sky,
With whom the Angels lingered through the Night,
And whispered memories of Paradise.
She strewed her Visions on the babbling World,
Like leaves of Lilies on a hurrying brook,
While her Soul's incense climbed the airs of Heaven.
God closed one avenue of light to ope
A holier, brighter, that her chamber filled
With the rose-radiance of the glorified.
Wings of invisible Spirits swept her Harp,
And from its still and silver strings arose

Fountains of Æolian melodies. She stood,
Calm as the level mid-seas of high thought,
Amid the buffetings of callous Crowds,
A-prowl like Lions for the milk-white Fawn,
Clasping her pale hands dumbly, as the snow,
And her blanched lips, like night-dew on the fields,
Sowed space with prayers. Above the chimney-tops
The white Dove, from the gateway of the East,
Heard a faint voice, as of a silver flute
Upon a moonlit lake, that prayed, "O Lord! O Lord!
Do Thine own will, and give me grace to bear;"
And then her praises warbled up the Sky
Through the hushed Night, and she was comforted.
The Dove's wing fanned her to the bliss of Sleep;
And like the statue of Mnemosynè
She lay, and dreamed of all the blossomed prime
When Dreamers shall be free to speak their dreams
Without the Bigot's red and burning brand.
A white Dove, from the gateway of the Dawn,
Through gloomiest streets, sped to a River's brink.
Wide, deep, and strong, the crimsoning river ran;
And up the current swift a Swimmer toiled,
As if for life. With one white, palsied hand
He clutched a Goblet brimmed with purple fire,
And with the other a young, fair-haired Child.
One of the twain must drop, or he must sink.
A glassy film crawled o'er his gleaming eyes,
And pallor smote his burning lips like death;
And, as the hot and vinous blood stormed up
Into his black, abandoned heart, he cried,
"Which shall I drop—the Goblet or my Child?"
Each moment closed a window of his life,
And soon would fall the iron weight of doom.
Then fell the Child's tears in the purple Cup,
And a faint-voicèd prayer went up to God,
"O Lord! change Thou his heart for Mother's sake,
Whose sickly form on Death's cold pallet lies."
The Dove's wing shook the blossoms on his heart;
And into the abyss he dashed the Cup,
And from Pollution's waters pearl-like rose
To bless the golden Star of Love and Truth.
A white Dove, from the gateway of the Sun,
In the bleak Night hung o'er the bannered Tents.
The gauntlets the mailed hand of Battle flung,
In proud defiance, to the giant North;
Moonlight was on the Camp; and on the hills
Bivouac-fires, like ghastly sunsets, blazed,
Presaging to the world a stormy dawn.
As a sad Maiden stealeth to the couch
Of her Belovèd in his fevered sleep,
Bathing his hot brows with the dew of tears,
The Moon came slowly through the hollow clouds,
And in majestic sorrow paced the Sky.
The moonlight fell upon the marbly brow
Of a young Soldier, and he dreamed of Home.
Close by his restless head a helmet lay,
And in his breast a lock of fadeless hair.
The aërial Artist of his visions drew
Upon his Spirit's woof an aged Man,
With a bent Matron, counting silver hairs,
Then, haply, fathoming each other's eyes
For thoughts of him so far, so far away;
And, when the thunder laughed up at the Storm,
Which rocked it in his cloudy lap, they groaned,
And shouted in the lightning's fiery teeth,
"Oh! give us back our Boy." The Morning came—
He was espoused to Death in Battle's wedlock!
The white Dove, from the gateway of the Sun,
Across the Ocean's billows, sorrowing sped,
Through the loud City, to a garret's eaves.
A sad, young Mother, with her shivering Babe,
Strewed her dishevelled sorrows on the wind.
The last faint embers in the grate died out,
And crumbled into ashes like her hopes.
From her numbed fingers fell the tear-stained garb
In which she stitched her life,—a poor, pale Slave!
Those tears congealed to mirrors in her eyes,
In which she saw her Girlhood's faded days,
When life was love, and time was melody.
Dead Summers of the shrouded years came crowned
With blissful flowers; and memories, like May,
Sang round her silver pleasantries of song.
"Ah! little Bird," she said, "the streets are chill,
And wet, and dreary; and the winds are full
Of legends of the Sea. Within my breast,
Come nestle closer, little fluttering thing;
Father will come again, and War no more
Shall blur sweet Heaven with sacrificial smoke;
And thou shalt dally with a Soldier's plume
As with a pretty toy." Mother and Babe
Slept in the dark, lapt in a dream of Peace.

THE ADVENT OF PEACE.

AFTER THE RUSSIAN WAR.

God bade War's reign to cease,
And straightway to the Earth an Angel came,
Her footsteps gilding the green hills with flame—
'Twas Peace! 'twas Peace! 'twas Peace!

A thing divine was she;
Young Children at the pageant clapped their hands,
And gladdened eyes beheld her through the lands
Beside the smiling Sea.

Back fled the fiend of War,
Like Lucifer, when God's shining Angel rose;
And pallid Nations leapt up from repose,
'Neath Freedom's morning Star.

Then rose the trampled Corn,
And crowned the hills and valleys with its gold

And where the crimson Battle-smoke had rolled,
The Skylark sang at Morn.

Then Olives wreathed the bowers,
Clusters of fearless Daisies in the South
Grew by the mouldering Cannon's great dumb mouth,
And young Lambs lay in flowers.

The World with plenty rained;
Where the wild Warrior took his fiery leap
O'er worm-like batteries, did Labour reap
A Harvest-field unstained.

Ships in the Harbour lay,
Beneath the shadow of the mighty hill;
Their port-holes closed, their thundrous voices still,
And Doves flew o'er the bay.

By Orchards blossom-white,
The Grandsire told his Darling by his side,
How over the fair Earth swept War's red tide,
And fell its cruel blight.

Then Love's world-clasping bow
Flung its bright bridge across the waves of strife;
And Beauty, o'er the arid wastes of Life,
Did, flower-like, bud and blow.

Then Music's harmonies
Burst into wings, and Art seraphic blazed;
And Poetry, first child of God! upraised
To Heaven her trancèd eyes.

Give Thou the rich increase,
Father of all! who didst in mercy send,
Of Earth the Sabbath, and of toil the Friend,
Sweet Peace! sweet Peace! sweet Peace!

THE POET-SEER OF THE AGES.

INSCRIBED TO ROBERT BROWNING, THE POET.

"YET still, in all his singing,
Thinks haply of thy Song
Which, in his Life's first springing,
Sang to him all night long."

MRS. BARRETT BROWNING.

STANDS the Poet by the River in the mellow sunrise-gleam,
And onward, onward, onward, rolls Life's everlasting Stream:
As the River onward floweth, like an artery, calm and strong,
'Tis the Poet only knoweth the grand import of its Song.

Now it sparkles in the sunshine, now it darkles in the gloom.
Now past fiery wildernesses, now past hills of heather-bloom;
Now over slippery falls, and through flowery meadows gay,
But onward, onward, onward, rolls the River *on its way;*
And the Poet can but hush and hark the Music of its psalm,
Grasping the Fulcrum of a god within his Mental palm.

Round about that River hangs a sapphire-tinted cloud,
While on its banks Humanity walks, worn and anguish-browed.
Pollution, like a jewelled thing, through palace-portals crawls,
And Nobleness, like the Bird of Heaven, dwells in mud-built walls;
Here Wealth reposes, like the Bird that sleeps amid the Storm—
There Want in miserable dens lays down its shrivelled form;
Sometimes an Angel passes, with her golden-streaming hair,
Like some pure Eden-wandered Star amid the darkness fair;
And forms like gifted Seraphs on the shadows turn their back,
And, with their Faces sunward, walk with glory on their track;
Some by the rolling River linger till the Sun goes down,
And, pearl by pearl, in Circe's cup they melt Life's purest crown;
Through battalions of warnings Passion leaps with fevered gleams,
And waves its crimson Banner over broken Hopes and Dreams;
And woe's the day and woe's the hour when Dis-illusion shows
The Leaves strewn by the Tempest—the Worm feeding on the Rose.

Around the brain of Genius coils a Hell-snake, flushed with glee,
Whose fierce elastic Fire-rings clasp with dreadful energy;
And Syrens ply their arts to lure the Voyagers from the strand,
And pallid-blossomed Trees of Death are planted on each hand.
Moral morasses, stagnant pools of ruin crowd the shore,
And poisonous exhalations circle up for evermore;
Angels, and Men, and Demons, ever jostle in the chase,
As the Whirligig of Being runs its red eternal race.
And sparing not decrepit Age, nor Youth in Life's heyday,
Still onward, onward, onward, rolls the River on its way:
And the Poet can but hush and hark the Music of its psalm,
Grasping the Fulcrum of a god within his mental palm.

All the Present, Past, and Future, could the Poet well descry:
The Pyramids may moulder, but the Soul can never die;

In a mood of Inspiration o'er the World his Spirit sped,
Soaring amid the wonders of the Endless, Deathless, Dead;
Ere the Divine Conception of the World's grand Poem rose
Above the liquid mass, and the glories of its close;
Ere Angels Earth's inaugural Ode sang on its natal Morn,
And Adam's matin-hymn of praise with Eve's was upward borne.

A pure and holy being, Man, trod Eden's fadeless bowers,
Whose Fruits no Winter blighted, and unwithered were its Flowers;
Now driven forth, a fallen Star, from Eden's golden gate,
He wanders with his fragile Bride, Heaven-exiled, desolate;
But as they win from Earth its Fruits in tears at Nature's call,
Some tribute-pearls of Happiness on Sorrow's cypress fall;
The wild siroc of Ruin swept Creation from that hour,
When Man had lost his purity, his majesty, and power.

The Poet-Seer walked forth sublime beneath the cope of Morn,
His friendly voice, his pitying tears, the mad World laughed to scorn.
Then showers of liquid Fire were sent at God's all-just decree,
And Sodom and Gomorrah sank 'neath Heaven's supremacy.
But still the sinful Epoch, like a Moral plague-spot, reigned,
And Souls with black Idolatries and Leprosies were stained.
Back from the azure canopy the Sun withdrew his glare,
Electric Meteors, like the swords of Demons, flashed in air,
Ethereal founts like marshalled Hosts in massive phalanx gushed,
Lightnings twanged their bowstrings, and forth flaming arrows rushed,
Or in mid-air they wrestled crushing everything that bloomed.
And with their scorching fiery tongues they Tree and Flower consumed;
Advancing billows o'er the Earth submerged the reckless race,
And a winding-sheet of water wrapt the World in its embrace;
The Plough of Retribution spared, nor men nor babes nor wives,
And the Reaper filled his granaries with Sheaves of Human Lives.

The Ark alone rode o'er the waves with all its Pilgrim-band,
Guided and guarded 'mid the wreck by the Almighty's hand;
On Ararat's green lofty cone that first May-Flower did rest,
With the seeds of a New Empire treasured in its teeming breast.

Then up rose chosen Israel, but in Bondage bowed her head;
The Masters of proud Egypt and her haughty Pharaohs fled.
Embattled Towers, and Temples where Monarchs bent their knees,
Like Autumn's transient glories, were swept before the breeze;
The splendour of Jerusalem and the Babylonian strand
Lay crumbled into ashes 'neath the shadow of Time's hand.
Well might the argent god of Day blush crimson at thy Shame,
Oh, City of Jerusalem, who now only art a name!

Imperial Rome her Eagles trailed in mingled gore and dust,
Accomplished Greece her graces gave to Slavery and Lust,
And the hallowed soil where once the Great High-Priest had trod,
Ran with the ruddy Life of the Saints that worshipped God;
And sparing not decrepit Age, nor Youth in Life's heyday,
Still onward, onward, onward rolled the River on its way.

Stands the Poet by the River, in the burning Sunrise-gleam,
And onward, onward, onward rolls that everlasting Stream.
Softly as Moonbeams o'er the roof of some moss-mantled Fane
He glides to read the Tablets of the Living and the Slain.
What record there is graven of our own illustrious Isle,
To make her Children glorious—their young hearts thrill and smile—
Pages for broils and battles, wreaths for Warriors and Kings
Emblazoned in the niche of Fame, while Freedom folds her wings,
And Genius shuts her heavenly eyes upon the world of bloom,
And, like a mournful Angel, weeps by the Historic Tomb.
Brawls and butcheries enough of Saxon and of Dane,
Little of generous Alfred and his daring Jury's reign;
Plantagenet and Norman Wars in lurid lines we read,
But little of Magna Charta and the chiefs of Runèmede;
Henry's lusts, Elizabeth's loves, poor Mary's sore distress,
James's amorous intrigues, Charles's utter recklessness;

But little of martyred More and murdered Raleigh enshrined,
Of Milton, Knox, and Luther, and the glorious gods of Mind;
Chronicles of Crime enough, of Agony and Despair,
But little of duteous Hearts and their liftings-up in Prayer.

Silent now is the Minstrel's lay and the Gaberlunzie's song,
Which told of Chivalry and Love in many a Castle strong;
O'er bridge, and moat, and bastion Time's dull lichen crawls,
And glossy Ivy-shrouds enfold the proud escutcheoned Halls;
But Nature o'er the clouds suspends her Lamp of luminous flame,
And with perennial splendour gilds her universal frame;
From nests 'mong juniper bushes heavenward Skylarks soar and sing,
And the Cuckoo's voice is mellow with the music of the Spring;
The skies are blue, the leaves are green, and fresh the flowers, and sweet,
While the Wrecks of Generations whitely moulder at her feet;
And with a calm unwrinkled brow, and open heart and strong,
Arrayed in virgin loveliness, she smiles for ever young!

The glad Day is advancing when ten thousand rills shall run,
To mingle with the River, leaping onward in the Sun;
Rich flowers, along its margin, of delicious breath shall grow,
And gales of human transport o'er the reeling valleys blow;
Then the great People, like one heart, with mutual Hopes shall thrill,
And Freedom's rosy radiance, like Dawn, gild every hill;
Then in the pastures of the Soul pure thoughts, like lambs, shall play,
And Kindness, soft as moss on graves, kiss hearts with Sorrow grey;
Religion—God's Life in the Heart—shall wear eternal bloom,
And Love distil its sweetness, like the golden honeycomb.
Stands the Poet by the River, in the roseate Sunrise-gleam,
And onward, onward, onward rolls that everlasting Stream:
And the Poet can but hush and hark the Music of its psalm,
Grasping the Fulcrum of a god within his Mental palm.

With high heroic longings, and Soul-faith in *the Divine,*
He thirsteth for the Eden where eterne Auroras shine;
A dazzling poppy-wreath hangs above the Poet's brow,
And the dews drop from its leaves on his aching Vision now;
A tear bursts from his heart, with its weight of Sorrow full,
Like the Angel walking over Bethesda's troubled pool.
The Dawn looks down with smiles through her lifted lids of air,
Like God's anointed Prophet, lo! his knees are bent in prayer;
A ladder formed of Dreams he climbeth with an upward glance,
And with his face still Sunward he doth evermore advance;
The heaven of his Visions is with starry buddings decked,
His heart shrines the Ideal of the Almighty Architect;
The inner chamber of his Soul new glory seems to win,
As he sees through Heaven's portals myriad Angels passing in;
His heart then gathers fragrance in God's happy fields above,
While quaffing from immortal Flowers the aroma of Love.

Oh, what a balmy quiet strewed the Poet's path of air,
It seemed paved with downy pinions which the ransomed Spirits wear;
God's heavenly Palace-portals with their pearly pillars bright,
In glory and in grandeur rose upon his ravished sight;
Birds of consummate beauty 'mong the blossomed Arcades sang,
And Trees which never grew on Earth, in Field and Garden sprang;
Flowers into life leapt suddenly, by God's own breath inspired,
The Seraphim culled nosegays in their silver robes attired;—
Strange bliss, like perfume, wafted o'er the Poets 'wildered Soul,
And beauty o'er those Forms of Love like melting Music stole;
The Sun down from the Zenith shone, and never knew decline,
Fringing with unsullied light the hemisphere Divine;
Nor was the voice of Sorrow, or the wail of the oppressed,
Ever heard in those divine Dominions of the blest;
Bliss and Beauty, born of Love, were free from all alloy;
For Holiness hung sentinel o'er every Thought of Joy.

Ever centreward and upward roundly rose each Royal ring,
And each centre, like a Nation, owned its Queen and King;

Not chosen for their blood or birth, or shining
golden load,
But for their Intellect and Worth the honour
was bestowed;
And many wore the Royal Robe, which jewels
did adorn,
Who on the Earth were clothed with rags, and
branded with its scorn.
God, seated on His Judgment-Throne, the
Cross, His sceptre, swayed;
And throats of Angels, soft and sweet, one
Song harmonious made;
And as the dulcet Music rose or fell around
His crown,
Unnumbered wings were spread on high, or
quivered slowly down.

Then back into the Poets' Soul the starry
Vision came,
The glory of the Spheric-Life still on its
wings of flame;
And he felt the Earth beneath him, with its
ruin and its wrong,
And he heard the mighty River rolling onward
calm and strong.

THE DEAD LEAF IN JUNE.

'TWAS June's most soft voluptuous day,
No Artist could the scene portray;
By glen and dingle, lane and brook,
I and my Love our way we took.
The mountain springs like gems of fire
On Summer's forehead glistened,
And Linnets from the rose-hung brier
Sang love-songs while we listened.

Then o'er the bluebell-haunted dells
Was borne the sound of Village bells;
We turned and gazed toward the hill,
Where stood the Church so white and still:
"We two are all the World," I said,
"Our hearts shall beat together,
Or cease to beat till Life be fled,
Through calm or stormy weather."

A beam of gladness lit her brow,
"My Love," said she, "I'm happy now;
I would not change this charming scene
Unless it were for Heaven, I ween."
And then a light shone in her eye
As of an Angel's brightness,
And on her cheek a crimson dye
Blushed 'mid the Lilies' whiteness.

I clasped her fondly to my side:
"Talk not of Heaven, my love!" I cried;
"Thou art so young, and good, and fair—
Why art thou yearning to be there?
Shouldst thou be first to go to Heaven—
My pearl of pearls the rarest—
I'd decorate both morn and even
Thy tomb with Flowers the fairest."

"Oh! then," said she, "may Life soon end,
For death is but a welcome friend;
This moment in thine arms I'd lie,
And breathe away Life's latest sigh."
Before the falling of the leaf
She in the grave was sleeping,
And tears of grief, without relief,
The Flowers she loved are steeping.

INVOCATION TO THE ANGEL OF SLEEP.

ANGEL of Sleep, how beautiful thou art!
With snowy feet and star-besilvered wings!
Thou pourest balm o'er the poor wearied heart,
And bluntest Sorrow's most envenomed
stings;
'Tis thine to calm the brow of Pain,
And lull the tempests of the brain;
To heal Life's bleeding wounds and whisper
"Peace"
To many a Soul that seeks from care release.

Methinks from Heaven's bright gate thou dost
descend
With mystery and glory in thy train;
Thou art of Man the best and surest friend,
Renewing Health through every languid vein.
The King must doff his robes to thee,
The Beggar from his rags be free,
And Rich and poor thy blessedness may share,
And Bird and Beast thy comfort and thy care.

When thy weird wand hath touched his burning eyes,
The Miser grasps his yellow idol, Gold;
The Murderer sees his buried Victim rise,
And point with crimsoned finger to the
mould.
The Lover prints the fervent kiss,
The Mother sees her child in bliss;
The Conscience writes upon the mental scroll
Those visions which appal or thrill the Soul.

The sleep of the Somnambulist, how strange!
She laughs, weeps, dances, sings, while
gliding down
The winding staircase of the ancient Grange;
The moonlight shimmering on her flowing
gown.
Then to her Studio she creeps,
While still unconsciously she sleeps,
And paints a Picture of the copse and glen;
Then steals in silence to her couch again.

There is a sleep when every sense is dull:
An artificial draught—kind Mercy's breath,
Designed the pangs of fell Disease to lull—
A sleep so torpid that it seems like death.
The placid eyelids in eclipse,
No anguish moves the peaceful lips.
Entranced and statue-like the form is laid,
As though it were of Parian marble made.

An Infant's slumber on its Mother's breast
Is beautiful, encircled by her arms;
'Tis then Sleep cometh, like a heavenly guest,
With dewdrops for the Rosebud's blushing
charms;
But for the dimpling smiles which play
You'd almost think it lifeless lay.
Who would not give his longest lease of years,
To sleep as soundly and exempt from fears?

Serene and soft she breathes, yon Maiden fair,
Lapt in Oblivion's innocence and grace;
Pale starry asmine-blossoms wreathe her hair,
Which flows adown her sylph-like form and face.
The Cameo of her Sweetheart coy
She clasps, and seems to blush with joy.
Andfrom her slightly-parted lips the sighs,
As waves o'erflow their coral margin, rise.

Gently they fade, the beauties of the year,
Not locked in death, for Death himself is dead,
And nothing dies, but all things re-appear
In other forms, and leave their snowy bed.
The Flowers again at Spring's gladvoice,
Arrayed in splendour, will rejoice;
And musical with Birds the woods will ring,
And Joy be felt by every living thing.

So we shall fade, my Love, and sleep at last
Beneath the turf on which the Daisy springs,
Unheeding Summer's bloom and Winter's blast,
The wrongs of Peoples and the guilt of Kings.
Then we shall wake amid the blaze
Of the eternal Morning's rays,
And clasp our Darlings 'mong the white-robed choir,
Where Faith can never fade, nor Love expire!

THE LOVER'S TRYSTING SONG.

Come swiftly, Summer-evening,
Fade, fade, oh Summer-day;
Oh gild the whispering woodlands,
Dear Moon, with softest ray!
For then my Love-Star shineth,
Warm-leaning to my side:
Oh! long to wait it seemeth,
Until she is my Bride!

Come swiftly, Summer-twilight,
And let the Night be long,
And make the Garden beautiful,
Sweet Nightingale, with song!
But ah! I know a music
Far sweeter, Bird, than thine,
That sets my bosom beating:
'Tis Amy's voice divine.

Come swiftly, Summer-gloaming,
Oh, why dost thou delay?
For oh, to me the darkness
Is lovelier than the day!
My Love is like an Angel,
She cometh in the Night,
When all the world is silent
With wonder and delight.

Come swiftly, Summer-evening;
The Sun sets o'er the Mere!
She comes! my Love! my Darling!
Her footsteps I can hear!
Ye Heavens so bright and starry!
Thou blossoming Apple-tree!
Our Trysting-nook keep sacred
For my dear Love and me.

THE CHILD AND THE FAIRY.

A Child richly gifted with Beauty and Song
By the light of the Moon wandered forth 'mid the bowers:
A Fairy he met softly tripping along
By streamlets and meadows embroidered with flowers.

"Where goest thou, Cherub?" the Fairy exclaimed,
"Amid these green haunts of the hyacinth wild,
By night amid dangers which cannot be named,
Ah! what art thou seeking, young venturesome Child?"

"The Nightingale," said he, "I'm longing to hear,
Whose Bride is the Rose in a bath from the Sky,
With love so enamoured its music is dear,
Oh! could I but list to its warble, and die!"

Then sudden the Bird from a covert burst forth
Into passionate Song, and her notes were divine,—
Like the gush of a river, half-sadness, half-mirth;
And the Child sighed, "Oh! would that my Song equalled thine.

"The Spirit of Beauty I've seen in my sleep,
And garlands and chaplets she twined for my hair.
I woke: she had vanished, and left me to weep:
Oh! show me the Face that is sinless and fair!"

The Fairy then said, as she plucked a red Rose,
All beauteously braided with moss and with dew:
"When gathered it fadeth, no longer it glows—
Of Beauty and Bliss a similitude true."

"Then fain," said the Child, "would I lie on thy breast,
While Life glides away like a crystalline stream;
Whatever I seek still eludeth my quest,
And Heaven itself is perchance but a dream."

"Ah! no," said the Fairy, "Heaven is not to seek:
'Tis near thee, around thee, below, and above;
It dwells in the heart that is lowly and meek,
Its image is sphered in the bosom of Love.

"How freely and fully yon flowerets have shed
Their bloom and their fragrance regardless of Fame!
Live truly, and when thy bright Spirit hath fled,
Thy beauty and sweetness shall hallow thy name."

LOYAL LEAVES.

TO

AUSTEN HENRY LAYARD,

BRITISH AMBASSADOR AT MADRID,

THE FOLLOWING PAGES

ARE INSCRIBED IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE.

THE MEMORY OF THE HEART.

ONCE-on-a-time, long-years ago,
A Traveller lost his way:
The roads were shrouded all in snow,
And Darkness, like a pall of woe,
Around the mountains lay:
And should he turn to left or right,
Some Danger threatened, hid from sight,
Turf-covered pit or deep ravine,
Or lurking Wolf with hunger keen.

For help he breathed to Heaven a prayer,
And wildly gazed around;
When Hope was yielding to Despair,
A Fairy, like a thing of air,
Rose from the frosty ground.
Within her hand a Lamp she held,
The brightest he had e'er beheld;
She led him safely through the Storm,
Then vanished like some Shadowy-Form.

Years rolled away, a Phantom-train!
The Traveller, now grown old,
Remembered all the Past again,
Of Friendship every broken chain,
And words prized more than gold.
Oh! then his meditative Mind
To one mysterious Form inclined—
The Fairy with his Lamp of light,
Who heard his cry when lost in Night.

He sat him down beside a Well,
On that Autumnal morn;
Adown his cheeks the Teardrops fell,
While Robin Red-breast sang Farewell
To dead leaves, from a Thorn.
Just then, out of the yellow Mist,
The little Fairy rose, I wist,
Unchanged by Time's destroying hand,
In Heart, and Soul, and Features bland.

"Why dost thou weep, Old Man?" said he,
"Enjoy thy Present hour;
The years of Human Life must flee,
Like yonder leaflets from the tree
In Autumn's sun and shower.
So shall thy last days be thy best,
And richer, brighter, than the rest;
When sinks the frame by Time unstrung,
The Soul, the Soul, still, still is young!"

"Ah! no," the poor Old Man replied,
"It is not Fate I fear;
Life speedeth fast as Rivers glide,
And I can trust my heavenly Guide,
Whose Lamp shines bright and clear.
The Tears I shed are Tears divine,
They're gems from Feeling's deepest mine:
Oh! canst thou name them by thy spell?
For purer Tears from eyes ne'er fell."

"Perchance those Tears are Tears of Grief,
That Heaven doth send to all;
For oh! while drops the faded leaf,
In every Cup of Life so brief
Some bitterness must fall.
Or are they Tears of Joy that dim
Thine eyes to hear yon Robin's hymn?
Or Tears of Love; for Love can weep,
And weeps the most when most 'tis deep?"

"Not those my Tears," the Old Man said,
"From Gratitude they flow,
For thee, kind Fairy, me who led,
When Midnight gathered round my head,
In storms of hail and snow.

All deeds of ill I soon entomb,
But good ones with my Tears rebloom.
Oh! gentle Fairy, kind and sweet,
My grateful Tears fall at thy feet."

OUR LADY THE QUEEN AND OLD ENGLAND.

I LOVED thee, my England, when a child
I rolled in thy Summer flowers;
Leapt over thy crags and mountains wild,
Where the old Oaks build their bowers.
And wheresoever my steps may roam,
And whatever land I see,
Oh! my heart will be the sacred home
Of delightful thoughts of thee.
Let us drink to the Braves of our own native Land,
To her Women of loveliest mien—
Hurrah for Old England, the gallant and grand!
Three cheers for our Lady the Queen!

Thy commonest nooks are Pictures fair,
That fondly to memory cling;
They are glorified in a radiance rare,
Like clouds 'neath a rainbow's wing.
Thy cradled lakes, thy rose-wreathed lanes,
And thy primrose-glens are fine;
A rich God's-garden embalmed with rains
Art thou, Oh fair Land of mine!
Let us drink to the Braves of our own native Land,
To her Women of loveliest mien—
Hurrah for Old England, the gallant and grand!
Three cheers for our Lady the Queen!

My Soul was up-borne on waves of glee,
As of yore my Mother sang
Of thy glorious Past melodiously,
Thy Martyrs' immortal pang:
Thy priceless jewel of Freedom came,
As if in God's own right hand,
Through rapturous streams of blood and flame,
To crown thee, my Fatherland.
Let us drink to the Braves of our own native Land,
To her Women of loveliest mien—
Hurrah for Old England, the gallant and grand!
Three cheers for our Lady the Queen!

Each leaf in thy garland by some deed
Was bought of thy gallant Braves;
Each heart has some dear immortal seed
Deep sown in thy Churchyard graves;
Oh! we will guard thy Shrines and thy Name,
Heart to heart, and hand to hand;
And woe be to him who bringeth shame
On my English Fatherland.
Let us drink to the Braves of our own native Land,
To her Women of loveliest mien—
Hurrah for Old England, the gallant and grand!
Three cheers for our Lady the Queen!

Of every Land thou art still the Flower,
And a Lighthouse to them all,
Wealth's prosperous hive and Beauty's bower,
Too noble to flee or fall.
Oh! thine was never the Meteor's flame,
But a constantly growing light,
Like the morning Star, for aye the same,
Illuming the realms of Night.
Let us drink to the Braves of our own native Land,
To her Women of loveliest mien—
Hurrah for Old England, the gallant and grand!
Three cheers for our Lady the Queen!

From thy golden centre Truth's beams flow
In splendour, from zone to zone;
And Knowledge springs as her Daisies grow—
The seed is so broad-cast sown.
Roseately bloometh thy fragrant soil,
Where Helicon's music flows,
And Singers leap from the ranks of Toil,
To chant of the Old Red Rose.
Let us drink to the Braves of our own native Land,
To her Women of loveliest mien—
Hurrah for Old England, the gallant and grand!
Three cheers for our Lady the Queen!

Oh! she who reigns in her Woman's prime
To-day is of Queens the Gem;
Minerva-like is her brow sublime,
With Jupiter's diadem.
May Freedom a garland round her wreathe,
By the breezes of Heaven fanned;
Love, Beauty, and Music ever breathe
O'er my English Fatherland.
Let us drink to the Braves of our own native Land,
To her Women of loveliest mien—
Hurrah for Old England, the gallant and grand!
Long life to our Lady the Queen!

LORD PALMERSTON.

FOR his Worth, and Wit, and Thought,
Albion mourneth o'er him;
For his heart, with feeling fraught,
Long will all deplore him.

Sentinel beside the Throne,
Lowly hearts he lightened:
Many a shaded Home hath shone,
By his goodness brightened.

Gone is our illustrious Chief,
England's hope and honour:
Fame ne'er bound a riper sheaf
To bestow upon her.

Rests his noble head in peace,
Grateful hearts bewail him;
Crowds weep tears that will not cease
Kindred Spirits hail him.

Snows of Age lay on his head;
Spring, at Winter smiling,
In his heart its blossoms shed,
Time itself beguiling.

Hale old man of cheerful mien,
  Gentle thoughts shall fold him;
From the Subject to the Queen,
  Dear we all shall hold him.

Bold and fearless in his Youth
  England proudly found him:
In his Manhood Duty, Truth,
  And patient Labour crowned him.

Blooming in his genial Age,
  Patriot victorious!
He shall live in History's page,
  With the Great and Glorious.

Truer Friend ne'er grasped a hand
  When assailed by Faction;
Mediator he would stand,
  Quell the loud distraction.

He was like the British Oak,
  Famed in Song and Story;
Green 'mid Time's relentless stroke,
  Monument of glory!

In his lustihood sublime,
  Skyward from Earth's flooring,
Wreathed with Honour's vernal prime,
  And sturdy Virtue's soaring;

Shielding with his stately form
  Those whom Hate was melting;
Long-enduring when the storm
  On his head came pelting.

Sheltering the World's oppressed,
  Nourishing Endeavour,
Better man ne'er went to rest,
  Shrined in Fame for ever.

THE ROYAL PROCESSION.

THE Summer Sun shone overhead,
  One glorious Festal-day;
And all its noontide splendour shed
  Down on a Pageant gay;
For dear Victoria, England's Queen,
  And Albert, good and great,
'Mid ringing Cheers, rode through the scene,
  In all their pride of State.

As from the Balcony we gazed,
  My Children two, and I,
The swords and plumes and helmets blazed,
  And Queen and Prince rode by.
And all along those serried ranks
  Arose ten thousand Cheers,
And Queen and Consort bowed their thanks,
  With happy smiles and tears.

I never saw so grand a sight,
  And wondrous glad, I ween,
The Joy-lit glances flashed so bright
  Of England's worshipped Queen.
Prince Albert seemed a stately Oak,
  Victoria, a Rose:
I prayed they might, from every stroke,
  Safe in Love's arms repose.

With childish wish my Daughter said,
  "Would I the Queen could be,
To wear a Crown upon my head,
  And roam the world as free:
To mount up to a gorgeous Throne,
  A golden Sceptre sway,
A Palace and a Realm mine own,
  And none to say me Nay!"

My dream-eyed Son oped wide his eyes,
  With wonderment, and said,
"To wear that rich right-regal guise
  I'd be the Prince instead:
The lovely Queen to linger near,
  In Castle, Court, and Ship;
And with each accent charm mine ear
  That moved her honied lip."

I could not then forbear to break
  Their Souls' romantic spell,
And tell them Kings and Queens were weak,
  And often sad as well.
That some had reigned, hard-hearted, proud,
  Licentious in their power,
And heads crowned by the cheering Crowd
  Fell in a crimson shower;

Of goblets drugged, of fears profound,
  Of Slander-poisoned fame,
Of gaudy insects fluttering round
  The dazzling royal flame;
That Monarchs felt those venomed stings
  Which Wealth could never kill,
And in lone chambers Queens and Kings,
  Like us, were human still.

I said, "Oh! sweetest, best of Girls,
  Be thou like England's Queen,
Oh! crown thy Life with Virtue's pearls,
  That Crown of Crowns serene;
My darling Boy, oh! cheer thee then,
  Be noble, great, and wise,
As Albert is, that Prince of Men;
  For goodness never dies."

QUEEN VICTORIA'S VISIT TO THE SICK GROOM, CHARLES BLEGG.

ROUND Sandringham the snow lay deep,
  O'ermantling hills and vales;
Kind hearts were gathered watch to keep
  Beside the Prince of Wales.
When Health's returning roses bland
  Perfumed his sweet repose,
The news was flashed through all the land,
  And prayers and blessings rose.

But one, of whom we little thought,
  So low his rank and name,
To Death's o'ershadowed door was brought
  By Fever's subtle flame.
At length the Queen of England sped
  To that sequestered room,
Where, on his little narrow bed,
  Reclined the Prince's Groom.

"Go, tell his Mother of my grief,"
  Spake she, with feeling true;
"'Twill be some solace and relief,
  For I'm a Mother too;

My own Son's life is not more dear,
'Neath Death's uplifted dart,
Than his, so swiftly ebbing here,
To yon poor Mother's heart.

"Raise to his lips the cheering cup,
Bring all your skill profound;
For him let prayers be offered up
In all the Churches round;
For in God's sight no life is mean,
Nor any flower that blooms;
No difference exists between
A Prince's and a Groom's."

Forgotten were foreboding fears,
And thanks the Sufferer smiled!
Her Majesty was touched to tears,
While breathing accents mild.
His Spirit left the casket riven,
But in the shroud arrayed,
That smile, a sudden gleam of Heaven,
Around his lips still played.

How few of all the rich and great
Would such example show,
To visit one of low estate,
And sympathise with woe!
The poorest feel Affliction's stings,
Like those who sit on thrones;
And He who reigns the King of Kings
No vain distinction owns.

Our Queen hath gracious gifts, that shine
Through tears of sacred love;
Hers is a Royalty Divine
By Angels crowned above;
'Tis not her Kingdom, free from strife,
Nor Wealth, that gilds her name,
For in the humblest sphere of Life
Her Worth would shine the same.

AN ENGLISH SPRING.

O! WELL-BELOVED Spring!
Thrice welcome be thy ever-blessed calm!
Flash o'er the Winter-world thy glittering wing,
And steep the Woodlands in thy bliss and balm.
The Orange-groves have had thy smile too long;
My Soul is like a shallop, and its sails
Waiting till filled by thy delicious gales,
To waft it to the Golden Isles of Song—
O! well-beloved Spring!

Come, flower-hearted Spring!
Love in thy smile, and music in thy tone;
Scent with thy breath the lane hedge-rows, and fling
The Violets in the nooks of wood-paths lone.
Oh! thou art coming with thy graces bland,
The sunshine ripeneth thy infant bud,
Which soon shall glow in perfect Woman-hood,
And fill with joy and fragrance all the land.
Come, flower-hearted Spring!

The Seasons' Childhood, Spring!
O! back it never cometh to the breast;
However high the Skylark soars to sing,
It looketh fondly on its lowly nest.
Thus ever to our Childhood's days we turn,
The brightest pictures in the frame of Age,
In our Life's book the purest, goldenest page,
Though o'er its cherished graves we vainly yearn,
The Seasons' Childhood, Spring!

Queen of the Year, fair Spring!
O'er thy Flower-kingdom stoop from Heaven to reign;
Thy Coronation-ode the Lark shall sing,
And the loud Thrush shall chant its merriest strain.
Come, Nymph of Eden, with thine azure eye;
I hear thy laughter all along the hills,
And like a bursting bud my worn heart thrills
To feel thy warm breath, like a virgin's, nigh—
Queen of the Year, fair Spring!

O! bright Enchantress, Spring,
Thy blossom-feast spread for the revelling Bee;
Break from thy shell, thou wondrous wingèd thing,
A fluttering Rainbow; Earth and Sky and Sea
Suffuse with gold and saffron; wake the Flowers
In all thy hermit nooks; descend and fill
With thy rich light the goblet of the hill,
And make a Paradise this world of ours—
O! bright Enchantress, Spring!

O! beauty-bringing Spring!
Glad time of Flowers, Song, Sunshine, golden Dawns,
Crowning with coronals each Forest-king,
While sings the Cuckoo o'er the dewy lawns;
The poorest Weed looks up in thy fresh smile,
The lambs and fawns are merry in the vales,
And the sweet clinking of the milking-pails
I hear, while lingering by the meadow-stile—
O! beauty-bringing Spring!

Blithe health-restoring Spring!
Waft me a gale of fragrance from the Seas;
Stranded I lie with tired and folded wing,
Till thy rich tide shall float me to the breeze.
Oh! lead me forth once more into the glen,
Beside the roaring Waterfall, to cull
A bunch of frank Primroses beautiful.
I know these lips shall kiss them once again—
Blithe health-restoring Spring!

Hail! life-awakening Spring!
Bring forth thy rich pellucid diadem,
And crown thy Angel brows; around me fling
Thy healing garment, while I touch its hem;
Or, if I may not meet thee, beauty-browed,
In lanes where blossometh the Hawthorn tree,
Come to my couch, and I'll dissolve with thee,
As in the Sunset melts a Summer cloud—
In Heaven's Eternal Spring!

THE KING OF THE FUTURE.

'Twas in Life's happy, youthful time,
When Spring had decked the Earth with grace,
And in the Lime the Birds made rhyme,
And Love beamed in Creation's face.
Bound in a golden zone of Bliss
Well might the jocund moments speed:
Lip meeting Lip in holy kiss
Of sweeter Pleasures still the seed.

He was a Thought-King, bright and brave,
And she was gentle, good, and kind:
The fire of Truth him courage gave,
And Love and Goodness swayed her mind.
She bound his heart with silken cords,
Stronger than adamantine chains:
He hung with rapture on her words,
And Joy attuned his vocal strains.

Formed of all holy hours and hopes,
He saw around her Spirit rise
Humanity's ascending slopes,
And glorious possibilities.
She seemed a Tree for bearing Fruits,
A noble and illustrious band
Of ever-vernal, human shoots,
In bowers of branches to expand.

Affection twined around her head
A Spiritual crown, from whence
Delicious honey-dews were shed
By Love's pure angel—Innocence;
And, oh! for every Sorrow's cross,
That Heaven-anointed Bride might bear,
Her People's love would heal the loss,
And brighter gems her brow would wear.

Where Roses and Carnations bloomed,
And Seabirds soared in daring flight,
Where hills their cloudy crowns assumed,
And lambkins sported with delight,
They grew in comeliness of form,
And symmetry by Nature coined,
With kindred thoughts and feelings warm,
Like Venus and Apollo joined.

Then with her Being intertwined,
A germ of Life began to grow,—
A Babe unborn, by Heaven designed
What Future Men may be to show.
Strange Queen of essences unknown,
In what proud realm art thou inisled?
Where hast thou reared thy regal throne,
If not within the dawning Child?

Young Mother, 'tis thy Mind that steers
That precious fragile Spirit-Form,
Which glasses all thy smiles and tears
Amid the sunshine and the storm.
Beneath thy sacred Mother-wing
That beauteous Nestling bursts to bloom,
That tiny, tender, timorous thing
Feels all thy gladness and thy gloom.

That Babe may shine as shines the Sun,
Mantled with majesty and might;
His kingly course with joy to run,
And from the zenith smile in light:
Or it may be a Curse hung up,
To pierce with Passion-poisoned darts,
Distilling death-drops in Life's cup,
And sorrow in a world of hearts.

Nature delights her wealth to pour
Into the many-chambered mind
Of the young Child; and hour by hour
Some fresher source of Joy to find:
And if an impulse true be given
By thee, fair Mould of the unborn,
Its heart may bloom a second Heaven,
And every earthly Sphere adorn.

The blithe May-Morn, with spangling beams,
Alit on every Flower of Spring,
Whose face was mirrored in the streams,
Just like a happy human thing;
And in that Palace by the lawn,
Where rich laburnums drooped in grace,
A little human Rose did dawn
With smiles up in his Mother's face.

With wistful eyne she blessed her Boy:
Her heart was Eden's blissful realm,
And prayer, and gratitude, and joy,
Wave after wave her Soul did whelm.
Then Fancies fond sang o'er her head,
Hope's Minstrel charmed the vernal gale,
And choicest Flowers their odours shed,
Love's representative to hail.

There lay the Stranger-Nursling new,
A Dewdrop on a Lily's leaf,
A smiling gem of ruby hue,
Undimmed by the alloy of grief.
He was the Mother's holy Dream,
Which now had ta'en an actual guise:
She was the Fountain, he the Stream,
And higher he could never rise.

The Sabbath-morn, on wings of gold,
Within the Chamber glided soft;
The Husband then his Wife did fold,
And pressed her pale lips oft and oft.
Their privilege it was to learn
Parental bliss in Baby-charms;
And o'er that budding Cherub yearn
With closelier-clinging spirit-arms.

Those jewel-smiles from Baby's eyes
Enwove a crown round Mother's heart,
Where countless hopes began to rise
Of every love-born wish a part.
And long the doating Mother mused
Of what would be the Princeling's fate:
And airy Dreams her thoughts suffused,
Till heart and brain did palpitate.

Then o'er his Father's face did flash
A ray like an effulgent fire;
He heard his Darling's harp-strings clash,
Like Alfred's in the World's Star-Choir.
His Soul with Wisdom's jewels decked,
And casketed in Manhood's mould,
While harvestings of Intellect
'Gan multiply a thousandfold.

A fiery brand hung in the Sky,
Which drove them on across the Main;
And from the ghastly scene they fly,
As startled Murderers shun their slain.
But pictures of that famished load,
In visions of the Night, would come;
And hideous Phantom-shapes bestrode,
With gibbering lips, their Feasts of Rum.
Invisible fingers slit the sails,
Voices shrieked the rigging through,—
A livid, ghost-like, chattering Crew
Stalked, fleshless, shroudless, 'mid the gales.
A spectre Boat chased through the Seas,
A-racing on the racing wave,
Blown onward by the moaning breeze,
With corpses lashed that found no grave.
A Curse was round them, like a fire;
And wrapt them in its lurid flame:
On Crime's black shadow, fierce with ire,
Grim Retribution's footsteps came.

From Otaheite's charming shores,
With Otaheitan women twelve,
The "Bounty" speeds where Ocean roars,
Far out from beach or rocky shelve.
From Heaven's far-seeing, frowning eye,
Sated with Crime, that breeds Despair,
Where shall they fly? where shall they fly?
An Isle of Refuge where, oh! where?
Along the coast with its jutting crags,
Where the chased waves plunge, like foaming stags,
In gold and purple mist and bloom,
With green and coral Bay,
The peaks of Pitcairn gleamed through gloom
Over the Sea's highway.

On Pitcairn's distant rocky Strand
They disembarked. Long leagues of foam
And dangerous surf engirt the land,
And mapped it out as Safety's home.
The last Boat left the fated Bark;
Fired by a smouldering, lighted brand,
The Sunset on her trembling shrouds,
She tilted over the Seas of dark,
Under the hyacinth clouds.
And from the coast's secluded marge
They gazed upon that shadowy speck,—
A dim, forsaken, burning Wreck,
While the Moon rose red and large.
The crackling flames rushed through the gloom;
The low horizon swam in fire;
A canopy of awful doom
Hung o'er that floating hecatomb,
That grim and sacrificial pyre!
The Ship her lovely plumage shed
O'er the red abyss in many a shred;
Rigging and masts, a blackened heap,
For many a league bestrewed the Deep.
The seething billows gleamed afar,—
A placid Hell without a Star!
The disembowelled Hull drove on,
Charred and burnt to the water's brink,
Beheld, from that rock-sheltered Strand,
By Women, and Babes, and moody Band.
They watch each blazing fragment sink
Which severs every human link,
And hope of return is over and gone.

Crime's harvest ripened. War's hot rain
Incarnadined that Eden-land;
And Christian and his evil Band
By those they wronged were grimly slain.
A group of Children, free from care,
Still lived, o'er Sin their beauty flinging,
Like Wallflowers to a Ruin clinging,
Shedding welcome fragrance there.
Adams and Young survived—became
The fathers of another race,
Accustomed to the healthy chase,
And every daring, manly game.
That stalwart Sire—that dusky Wife—
Those Children meekly gathered near—
In tender cheerful accents hear
The wisdom of the Book of Life;
Or, worshipping on some hillock, crowned
With the imperial palm, they raise
Their quivering lips in prayer and praise,
The Sea's psalm mingling with the sound;
Sitting on rude, unchiseled stones,
Along the Beach, in silent awe,
When God's voice most is heard in tones
The Soul's sealed icy fount that thaw,
Melting it into tears, that flow
As beautiful as evening's balm—
So soft, so chastened, and so calm—
From the sterile source below.
Oh, what a scene for man to prove,
The power of Temperance, Peace, and Love,
And Grace that cometh from Above!

Long Winters whitened flower and tree,
And came and went the bird and bee,
Dead roses strewed Elysian floors,
Ere Ship touched on those emerald shores,
Whose leafy Islands kiss the Sea.
Divineliest Epochs sing around
That glorious clime by the western Seas;
The Orange-blossoms strew the ground;
And golden Fruits star flowering trees;
In Summer's glory songful groves
And vernal woodlands richly rise,
Walled round by blue and golden skies,
And haunted by the silver doves.
Beneath the sheltering Olive-leaves
The sun-browned Reapers rest from toil,
Or bind the affluent barley-sheaves,
With songs on Freedom's soil;
And roundelays of rural glee,
And Shepherd-love for maiden fair,
And legends of the Isle and Sea,
In rude-built Cabins charm the air.
Love is cradled on every lip,
And Honour glows in every eye;
And all the gentlest graces trip
With Truth and Beauty by.
Their cares as thistle-down are light;
Tears brief as dewdrops in the bowers;
The hive and home of each delight,
Of thoughts like doves, and joys like flowers.
Oh! hear the moral lesson grand!
What makes this region blest?
Strong Drink is banished from the land,
And Love inspires each breast.
Oh! that the whole wide world could be
As Pitcairn's Island, fair and free!

ALFRED TENNYSON.

POET-LAUREATE.

INCOMPARABLE Poet! Heaven and Earth,
With all their summerly and starry throng,
Shall bloom with brighter beauty for his birth,
And Time grow young, through his melodious Song.
With sweetness, grace, and elegance combined,
Our gifted Singer's sacred Muse is crowned;
Immortal Heir of truth and thought profound,
And noblest reflex of the Perfect Mind.
With Wordsworth 'mid the Spheres his Soul can dart,
When challenged by the glory of his theme;
Or sink as softly to the simple stream
Which melts an Infant's or a Woman's heart:
With Shakspeare's power the Passions he can probe,
Most worthy Bard to wear his royal robe!

And if a scene of beauty he would paint,
He hath an Artist's eye for lights and shades,
For graceful groups and crystaline cascades,
Groves, Gardens, and delicious odours faint.
Touched by his skill the Picture starts to Life,
As when the Sun awakes the world to Song,
And fairy forms through stately mansions throng,
And mail-clad Warriors leap into the strife.
He hath our classic Chaucer's rhythmic flow,
The love of pomp and pageantry serene;
And Milton's dignity and grandeur glow
In every noble line that frames the scene.
His thoughts are pure as Kirke White's blossoms strown
In one rich Vallombrosa at God's throne.

My little "Pansy" knows by heart his rhymes;
And in her own unequalled, saucy way,
Will taunt me with mine own inferior lay,
In one day's golden length, a hundred times.
"Oh! Papa, when will you a poem write
Like Tennyson's 'May Queen?'" I feel no spite;
But kiss her brow, and answer, "Bless the Giver!
A thing like that once done is done for ever!"
Sometimes she says so archly, "Could I gaze
Just through a pin-hole of his window-blind,
And see him seated by his fireside-blaze,
'Twould be a lasting pleasure to my mind."
I answer, "Child, that day will never dawn,
He keeps a curtain o'er his Portrait drawn."

I never knew how sacred, grand, and sweet,
His poems were, until my beauteous Bride,
With slow decline, watched Life's pure streamlet glide
Within her quiet Chamber's lone retreat:
Her preference with the Holy Book they shared;
Like strains of Music melting in a psalm,
And throbbing to the Heavens in cadence calm,
Soothing her Spirit when it most despaired.
When Life's last sigh she breathed, close to her side
The Poet's volume lay she loved the best;
And in between the leaves the Flowers were pressed
Near passages which pleased her ere she died.
I kissed those faded flowerets, and my Love
Seemed back to waft me kisses from above.

THE DYING ENGLISH BOY.

'TWAS on a golden-misted Summer's eve,
A sick Boy in the twilight gloom did lie;
For Home and Kindred did his Spirit grieve,
While Angels lit the iris of his eye.
A taper's feeble spark glowed in the room,
Above that youthful wreck on life's Spring-tide,—
A beacon light. A rosy streak of bloom
On his pale cheek Consumption's worm did hide.
"I know a lovelier Land," he cried,
"Over the Ocean's silver foam,
Where gardens blossom on every side—
Oh waft me Home! oh waft me Home!"

He dwelt 'mong Strangers, whose most tender care
Was not invested with that halo kind
Which crowned the absent, who most cherished were,
Like dew-drops in a Rose's heart enshrined.
The Birds which carolled in the sunny skies,
The sweet flower-scents, the starry azure dome,
Waked in his Soul dear Childhood's memories,
And sorrowfully breathed, "Come Home! come Home!"
"I know a lovelier Land," he cried,
"Over the Ocean's silver foam,
Where gardens blossom on every side—
Oh waft me Home! oh waft me Home!

"Oh gentle Friends," he said, "you give to me
All my affliction needs, and more, much more:
A soft hand makes my pillow daintily,
And brings of luxuries a countless store;
Rosina's leaf-soft fingers garland rare
Bright Melon-blossoms round my downy bed,
Till like a fairy grotto gloweth fair
My little room, where Orange-scents are shed.
I know a lovelier Land," he cried,
"Over the Ocean's silver foam,
Where gardens blossom on every side—
Oh waft me Home! oh waft me Home!

"My Life hath glided many a sunny hour
'Mong Almond-bowers, but tearful thoughts would come,
For wealth and luxury do lack the power
To compensate for loving hearts at Home:
I long to see my Mother's face benign.
And feel her blessing hand pass o'er my brow;
For on its lintels Death hath writ his sign;
But I would see my Kindred ere I go.

I know a lovelier Land," he cried,
"Over the Ocean's silver foam,
Where gardens blossom on every side—
Oh waft me Home! oh waft me Home!

"There stands the Cottage by the girdling Sea,
Deep in the Daisies, honeysuckle-wreathed,
Where dwell the Friends most loyal-true to me,
Whose prayers in absence oftentimes are breathed;
Beside a Glen where the sly Primrose grows,
Swathed in embroidered leaves of glossy green,
Where rapturously the Throstle's music flows,
And dimpled Apples grow with rosy sheen.
That is the loveliest Land," he cried
"Over the Ocean's silver foam,
Where gardens blossom on every side—
Oh waft me Home! oh waft me Home!

"The Orchards ripen in the Summer's smiles,
And the brown Skylark folds its dappled plumes
In nestling Flowers beneath gay-blossomed aisles,
Girdled with Trees and coronaled with blooms.
Oh! sweeter than the music of a stream
To fainting Pilgrim on the Desert-sand,
Glides through my heart the glorious rapture-dream,
Which bringeth memories of my native Land.
It is the loveliest Land," he cried,
"Over the Ocean's silver foam,
Where gardens blossom on every side—
Oh waft me Home! oh waft me Home!

"Light me, ye Stars, a-smile with tender eyes,
Thou Moon, a-gleam with heart of golden fire,
Until I gain that happy Paradise,
The Home of youth, and on its hearth expire.
You'll tell those absent dear ones, if I die,
That my last thoughts, like beads, for them were told;
And though I sleep beneath a Foreign sky,
They'll think of me when I am in the mould.
Heaven is the loveliest Land," he cried,
"Over the Ocean's silver foam,
And white-robed Angels downward glide,
To bear me Home! to bear me Home!"

THE MARTYR OF TUSCANY.

A SUMMER DAY'S REVERIE.

SCENE I.—A GROVE NEAR FLORENCE. GALILEO—HIS DAUGHTER—STUDENTS SCANNING THE HEAVENS.

OH! clasp me to thy bosom, Liberty!
I see thy form 'mid clouds of Priestly gloom,
Lighting them up with glory's fullest blaze;
I see thy punctured brow among the Stars,
Which wreathe a garland round it, formed of beams
And bloom imperishable. Goddess, hail!
From Alpine heights I see thy form descend,
Sun-mantled, and with crashing Thunders crowned,
Whose stroke is doom to fossil-hearted Wrong.
Fate's golden scroll up through the Sky I scan,
Where God in traceries of glowing Orbs
Translucent writes the destinies of Men
And Empires. I behold thee, mighty Rome,
Humbled to dust; for thou didst slay thy Prophets;
And, as a Lion mangles what he slew,
Thou dashest in their hearts thy grim red Curse.
But I will walk thy howling Den of Lies,
Proud Rome! Fair, strong-winged angel, Liberty,
Rear me an altar consecrate to thee
'Mid frozen regions, where the free, grand Sea
Rolls saddest music to the silver poles,
In Solitudes unbroken by a footfall;
Or 'mid the glistening peaks of yonder Alps,
Whose snowy tops jar the Sun's golden keel;
Or where thou ridest on thy steed, the Storm;
Thy sword, the Lightning; and thy clarion-blast,
The Thunder; thy banner, the great Sky, a-blaze
With glittering plumes of flame, rocked by the Wind:
There would I follow thee, as some weird Child
Follows the footsteps of the Great and Brave,
Beholding in each print a glory new,
Most glorious genius, Liberty!

ERNEST.

'Tis he,
The Tuscan Seer, with soft and silvery locks,
Which glow like skeinèd moonbeams. In these groves
He loves to linger; every Leaf to him
Is a green world of Life. The bright, bland breeze
Toys with his hair, and kisses his white brow
So lovingly, 'tis smit with reverence.
How very gently peer up in his face
The wilding Flowers, and smile like sentient things!
They, too, have life, and seem to know his foot
Would scorn to tread it out. Ay, that Old Man,
The Mystic, who would dash the Priestly lamp
Into the abyss of darkness, would not crush
With careless foot a sun-enjoying Fly.
His mien is stately as the plumèd Oak
'Gainst which he leans his large and sinewy hand;
And, like the branches of that lusty tree,
He lifts his glorious forehead to the Stars,
And dares the lightning-flash of Roman hate.
His robe hangs round him with a studious gloom;
And Cæsar, in his rich imperial purple,
Was not more noble. To men like him
The world owes all its greatness. Souls like his
Blossom but once an Age upon the stem
Of Time, claiming an Epoch's room to grow in;
Then die, to live in Truth's immortal seed.
The daily river of their lives runs o'er

Truth's grains of gold; and from their depths
Each wave of Thought throws up a precious pearl.
They drop their gems of glory on the world
They shone on, from their serene heights of Mind,
As affluently as Stars shed richest dews
Into the open lips of Summer-flowers;
They make our hearts run o'er, like Cups of Wine,
With gladness; and our tongues, like Bridal-bells,
Ring with their words set to the tones of Joy.
We tell the story of their Martyrdom
To our young Children, till their wild hearts dance,
And little arms are strained towards Heaven to pull
Some Cross or Scaffold down. That grand Old Man
Has a Woman's tender soul, a Child's love:
Madness will but kill him. In his full eye,
Now dark through gazing at the Moon and Stars,
Gleam thoughts of other years; and his white cheek
Is blanched with grief, like Winter's with the snow.
A young Girl 'neath his Roman mantle plays,
Like the bright Future with the sorrowing Past,
He bends above her with a dimpling smile
Joy's transient rainbow melting in the Sea.
The wild Bird's song has won his half-deaf ears
Amid the grass-plots, starred with rosying dews
And golden-hearted Flowers. Upon his staff
He leans; and, listening, like a Child he weeps.
Break not his reverie; he is with the Past,—
The Lost, the Dead, the Distant. He is like
A moonlit Ruin watching Time go by.
Yet this is he whose Fame has filled the Earth,
Whose life shed glory on the Roman name,
Who fought with tigers in the Papal den.
Oh! I could stoop to kiss his holy feet,
And heal their bleeding prints; for he has borne
The Cross of Martyrdom like Christ of old.
Ah! oft when Priests have gathered round Truth's grave,
God's Angel, with a glance, has struck them dumb.
They lick the human heart with Lions' tongues.
Avaunt, ye dark-cowled brood of Popish owls,
Ye dash the torch of Science in the dust,
Because it flashes in your murky-nest!
Ye Parasites that climb round Freedom's tree,
Swaying up Heaven its rich, melodious plumes,
Till all its verdant glory withers; fiends,
Bloodhounds, homicides, deflowering Truth;
Mad, prurient-visioned libertines, Avaunt!
Out of the light ye hate! and let it flow,
As flow it will, in many a bloody Dawn.
The Braves of Rome in blinding dungeons perish;
And Priests our hearts break into dainty wafers,
And fill their Sacramental Cups with blood.
God, dash Thy lightnings in their jolly eyes!
They laugh upon the Rapids of mad Wrong;
Glide smoothly with the current, drunk with Crime.
But hark! they waken on the dizzy edge,
Amid the Thunder of the slippery Falls;
Down, down, into the Cataract's black abyss!

GALILEO.

This furrowed clod is ripe for Harvest-Home.
I stand uncovered in the snow of Time:
Sweet is retirement to the world-worn heart,
And Age's tempests round me wildly beat;
Life's Sunset-gates wait to close after me.
How awful is the brevity of life!
This Oak was a green sapling in the Spring
Of buried years, when I beneath it played,
A merry Child; but now its head is green
With crowning verdure—mine is grey with years.
Eternity's white Dawn breaks on my brow;
And when I lay my sad Life down to rest
All pleasantly in the cool, tranquil grave,
This Oak will lift its plumage to the skies,
And wear its glorious emerald crown, as now.

ARTHUR.

The Tree shall rot at its worm-eaten core
After the lapse of centuries, and grass
Shall grow where now it grandly stands; but thou
Shalt summer evermore in Truth's glad beams
Immortal, and Posterity enwreathe
Thy name with tenderest memories and tears.
Thy head shall wear a still more glorious Crown;
And thou shalt grow through the Eternal years,
Where Pain, and Change, and Death, shall be no more.

MARIA.

My Father, why this sadness on thy brow?
Is not God greater than the Pope of Rome?
Is not Heaven higher than the Vatican?
Great Freedom's Dawn was never backward rolled
Into the womb of darkness. Truth is divine,
And Science never falters on her way.
She trims her Lamp of Stars, and flashes it
Serenely in the faces of her foes.
Every Truth has its Martyr; and his pangs
Come of Earth's proudest worship run to seed.

GALILEO.

My precious Child, staff of my waning years,
I envy not the heart that's never sad:
'Tis Sorrow makes the Soul sublime and wise.
A Tree grows 'mid this grove of strange half-bloom;
One side is filled with blossoms of the Spring,
As if the snow had drifted from the South,
And hung in rosy flakes among the boughs;
The other side is green, but blossomless.
Spring and Winter here seem clasped together
In one sweet embrace. It is thus with Life:
We live in shade and sunshine, sadness and joy.
Maria, Love! those grafted branches seem

Fair as thy hopes by innocence inspired:
Those barren ones illustrate all my fears.
Thou Dove that cooest o'er a Winter nest,
Where every whispered bliss lies cold and dead.
Oh! there is something, dearest, at my heart,
As if a doom hung o'er us. I dare not think
We shall be parted soon by iron bars
And granite walls, where roll the Tiber's waves.
Lo! I am kneeling by thy Mother's grave,
To draw fresh inspiration from that heart
Of Roman mould, which beat and broke for me.
Thou wert her jewel. Oh! from Eden's wreck
One Flower immortal grew,—a Mother's love.
Maria, kiss those wild Flowers on her grave,
Their loving eyes methinks are dim with tears.
My nestling Dove, this is thy Mother's grave,—
Let thy tears flow on.

MARIA.

Father, let us go.
Hark! how the Thunder smites his cloudy palms!
Truth shall be canonized in mighty Rome,
And all thy foes will then become thy friends.
They thrust their cruel fingers in thy heart
As deep as Doubt can go, and find it true.
There still is glory in the Roman name—
The Mother of the gods and God-like men;
The fossil never can become a plant;
But the crushed plant may grow. Truth's fragrant breeze
Shall sweep through Error's consecrated aisles.
Heaven's garden but wants weeding. Old brave Rome
Has done the Earth good service in her time,
And need not rot upon the waters now.
Faith grasps the heart-strings of the Orthodox,
Imagination vaults beyond the Stars,
And Reason dwindles to the smallest point.
'Tis easier to Believe than 'tis to Doubt.
When in thy grave, the Flower of Truth shall spring
Out of thy broken heart, and the glad World
Shall pluck it, and entwine it in the garland
With which she crowns the Good, the Great, the Brave.

SCENE II.—OBSERVATORY IN A GARDEN AT PADUA—GALILEO, HIS DAUGHTER, AND SEVERAL STUDENTS.

ERNEST.

Lo! how that fair Girl leans her beauteous head
Upon the Tuscan's bosom, like a Dove
Within its sheltering nest! Ah, soon to be
The Falcon's prey! Oh! how he loves that Child—
The one green Leaf on Life's Autumnal tree!
No simpering flower-girl, but a Woman, chastened,
Though young, by grief, whose poisonous dregs she drains.
The sword which strikes his heart will drink her life.
He gathers her beneath his stately robe,
As if to shield her from the ireful blast
Of Roman hate. My God ne'er dashed the cup
Of heretics with bitterness. Man's aliens
Are God's darlings, bound up in His heart
And with His glory-sheaves. The Storm, I see,
Is sitting on his throne of lurid clouds,
Writing his Thunder-Ode; the hailstones fall
Upon the shivering leaves, a black fog frowns
On heaven's bent brow, and lightning leaps the gulf,
Ablaze with fire like God's avenging sword.

ARTHUR.

How Nature listens to the Thunder-music,
Which, like an organ's, roars along her aisles!
How still are these old Woods of Olives green
To hear the wildly-carolling Bird of Storm!
The weather-whitened Oaks, like grim old Kings
Girding their armour for the Battle-day,
Stand awe-struck in the presence of the Storm.

ERNEST.

The Priests tread out the instincts of mankind;
They change the wine of Life to poisonous juice,
Then blaspheme Heaven by charging it on God;
And all are Visionaries, lapped in Night,
Who think what is not written in their Creed.
They stand, with Satan ever by their side
To let him slip unmuzzled on those Seers,
Who boldly challenge every monkish Lie.
There is a glorious Oneness in the Truth,—
Its centre is Divine where'er it shines;
As the same light is azure in the Sky,
Gold in the Sun, and crimson in the Rose.
Priests cannot cage it,—like a Carrier-dove
Truth mounts beyond the bolted gates of Rome.
Oh! shrine me, Tuscan, in thy dying heart,
More unto me than Roman mausoleum.
Call me thy Friend, that I may ope mine eyes,
With thine, above the courses of the Stars.

ARTHUR.

There's Freedom in the Bible old,
And Mercy, Love, and Duty;
In Nature, there is Truth untold,
And Lore, and Light, and Beauty.
Put on old Freedom's harness, then;
To Martyrdom defend her;
Light up the darkened hearts of men
With Love's divineliest splendour.

When Ichabod's charred Creeds are nill,
And like old parchments perish,
Love's universal Gospel still
All lands and tongues will cherish.
Dawn swiftly, swiftly, glorious time,
When brother links with brother,
And common grows Love's name sublime,
As Sister, Sire, and Mother!

Oh! Freedom cannot count her loss,
Ye Priests of silkenest knavery!
From Calvary's ensanguined cross
Rings out the doom of Slavery;
The Future dawns with crimson stains;
Light's chariot never falters;
Freedom shall hang her bridle-reins
On your Cathedral-altars.

ERNEST.

Ah! we'll put them to the rout—
  Priest and Monk, with shaven crown;
For they bar God's Sunshine out.
  Oh, drag them down! Oh, drag them down!

Yes; the world has learnt to doubt
  Vain professions without deeds;
While they bar the sunshine out
  With the shutters of their Creeds.

Precious Souls, begrimed with Sin,
  Seeking wisdom, find the tomb:
Ah! we'll let the sunshine in
  Where pale thousands crouch in gloom.

Surges of rich Sunshine gush
  From the glorious Orbs of Mind;
Truth burns like God in the bush,
  To win worship from the blind.

For the dawn the People pine,
  While in dungeons dark they grope;
And they cry for Light divine,
  While Priests keep the shutters up.

Hark! a million Spirits cry
  For the Light ye dare not give:
Ah! ye teach them how to Die,
  But they know not how to Live.

There are Gems of glory there,
  In the starkness of the tomb;
There are Flowers of beauty rare,
  In the darkness waiting bloom.

Will the Sunshine bless them never?
  Oh, Father! shall it be
That Souls sink thus for ever,
  Like scuttled ships at Sea?

Oh! by all that's True and Free,
  As we hope a Heaven to win,
By the Flame and Gallows-tree,
  Let us pour the Sunshine in.

GALILEO.

Proud, vaunting Priests! we heed no more
  your Lies in words of silk;
Ye did not well to crush the Hearts that
  supped on Lion's milk.
Unlock your murky Dungeons; pile your
  blazing Faggots higher;
Our Souls salute the Victims in the grim and
  crackling fire.
The People rise heroic-brained; eyes flash
  with glorious hope;
A breath will dash the Avalanche of Ven-
  geance down the slope.
Oh! we'll pay the price of Freedom with our
  lives flung down with pride;
For Martyrdom by Holy Christ of old was
  sanctified;
And millions rush to worship ere the Martyr's
  form expires,
In scattered ashes, charred and burnt, on
  Freedom's altar-fires.
Wash your hands, ye Priestly Pilates! Ye are
  in the black bead-roll;
And the blood of Heaven's Anointed is upon
  your guilty Soul.
Your fangs are in our bosoms, with the Tiger's
  gory grip;
The Hounds of Vengeance we unleash, and on
  you let them slip.
Vesuvius laughs mad mirth; the fire is redden-
  ing up the Sky;
Close, close in vain, thy Palace-Gates, Oh
  revelling Pompeii!
Oh! the merry time of Justice comes; 'tis
  nearer than ye wot.
Softly and slow uprolls the Storm, but the
  bolt falls seething hot;
And marvel not if we obey the lesson ye have
  taught us,
Ere to this grappling, clenched Despair, like
  fettered slaves, ye brought us.
Oppressors of the Christ-blest Poor, your feet
  shall slip in gore;
And shall we spare your hideous lives? Oh,
  black Ghouls, never more!
Take heed, ye cozening Cardinals, with Judas
  smirks and smiles!
We'll feed our Battle-horses in your grand
  Cathedral-aisles.
Oh, Murder's crimson Priesthood! take your
  funeral-lamps away;
The rosy prints of Dawn's sweet feet lead in
  the golden Day.
Down the glory-haloed Future there's a flood
  of Freedom rolled,
And Centuries from the heights of Time look
  down divinely-souled.
God's trumpet sounds. The Nations hear its
  music o'er the brine;
And grand old Milton's English heart breaks
  through the Royal line;
His conquering Soul came forth from God to
  trouble Life's dark stream;
And by yon noble River, lo! how Freedom's
  camp-fires gleam!
And while he wields so mightily his proud
  victorious pen,
Are gathering near in galaxies those bold and
  battling men.
One sterner, stronger, than them all uprears
  his lusty form;
'Tis brave outspoken Cromwell, like a watch-
  tower in the storm.
He dashed the kingly bauble to the grim dust
  fearlessly,
And of the Old World right divine evolved
  the lurking Lie.
O'er the Customs of white Ages he vaulted at a
  bound;
And Freedom's lineal conquerors, the People,
  now are crowned.
His single sword was mightier than the arms a
  nation bore;
His Island-Heart a surer shield than ever
  Spartan wore.

MARIA.

Lo, how his eyes with inspiration glow,
  And almost melt the whiteness of his hair,

Remembering how blind Milton's noble thoughts
Are being carved in brass by Cromwell's sword.

AN INQUISITOR APPROACHES.

A message from His Holiness the Pope,
The Sacred Council, and the Church of Rome.

GALILEO.

This Autograph is writ in hue of blood;
Friendship is frail, and fickle, and untrue;
And Princely names hide but impoverished hearts.
The Poor care for the Poor more than the Rich,
For those they patronise to win them fame,
And link their line with immortality.
Ah! happy they who in the harbour sleep
Of tranquil Life, nor ride the battling waves
Of public turmoil, which, like bloodhounds fierce,
Pant for a sacrifice to glut their rage.
Had no bold Spirit broken step in those
Stern ranks of Custom and Propriety,
Where had the world been now? True Lion-hearts
Leap on the spears of Bigots, hewing out
Freedom's great highway. I go to my doom
As merrily as Bridegroom to his couch;
And, when I die, a Future shall spring up
Sublime, and build above my dungeon-tomb
A rainbow-arch of memories and tears.
I ask no mercy but from Heaven. My prayers,
Upon the ears of these Inquisitors,
Would fall like music on the whirlwind. Hark!
I hear a more majestic Voice than theirs,—
The Voice of Truth within my awe-struck Soul.
Enough, if I have heard it not in vain.
Rome cannot bid a rolling world be still,
Nor quench the fires of Dawn! It moves, it moves;
And golden Morning breaks on Roman strands.
'Tis reddening now on the white peaks of Time!
'Tis light, 'tis light! Ay, sweep away the spawn
Of darkness that obscures this welcome day.
Oh, Father of eternal Light! lift up
Thy midnight visor, and the Dawn shall smile.
To teach mankind a single Truth is more
Than to have conquered nations with the sword.
Maria, sweet, that ominous hour is come.
When Sickness laid its hand upon thy Life,
I would not give thee up,—no, not to Heaven;
But Priestly hate will snatch thee, Darling, from me.
Farewell, my Child! beloved one, Farewell!
Fair image of that heart they trod to dust,
Bequeathing all its love and strength to thine!
Thou hast a Mother in Heaven, and our God
Will be to thee a Father. Lean on His arm;
When mine is stricken powerless to the grave,
His will sustain thee, Darling, to the last.
Oh! when I sleep within my dreary Prison,
And sing up through the midnight to the Stars,
Truth's glorious Form shall like an angel steal
To sanctify my dungeon. There is not
A spot so dark, or so remote, on Earth,
That Freedom cannot make a Sanctuary,
Round which bright Spirits hover, sent from Heaven
To strengthen the weak heart with Love divine.
Farewell, my Daughter! Only love, Farewell!

MARIA.

Nay, sooner shall the Sun forsake the Sky,
The Sea the shore, the Bird its mossy nest,
Than I be parted from thee, Father, dear;
Blind as thou art, oh! I will be thy guide.
The holy Moon has told her beads, and died
Calm as a Saint, to shine with glory new;
The Earth will soon be all a-smile with Flowers,
And gales of transport fan the brow of Spring.

ERNEST.

Weep not, Maria. He is gone.
The air is darkening; but the Dawn
Will soon emerge from trembling Night,
Rosying sombre clouds with light,
Like an infant from the womb,
Flushed with ruddy life and bloom.
Fraud shall soon her chambers bare;
Wrong shall feel the lightning glare;
Blood reveal its secret stain
To the blasting hurricane.
From the furrows of his brain
Will upspring immortal grain.

ARTHUR.

Within yon dungeon Cage
Another Martyr agonizing stands—
Another holocaust on Freedom's altar laid;
His holy feet are bound with iron bands;
His brow is snowed with Age.
To sting his noble heart with impious prayer,
The Cardinals and dark-robed Priests are there,
To ply their venal Trade.

O God! where lies the guilt
Between the Victim and the surpliced Priest,
Who that Heroic Soul Blasphemer calls;
Who gloats upon his sufferings like a feast,
As of a lamb's blood spilt?
The sinuous Worm prays while the Martyr bleeds;
Then for the Gospel pelts him with stern Creeds,
Wishing them cannon-balls.

With a majestic mien
The Christ-like Martyr fronts the Multitude.
By Priests the wine-press of his Pain is trod;
For they alone are thirsting for his blood
In the grand Torture-scene.
The People, wiser than the Priestly Creed,
With bosoms bounding with a fiery speed,
Now hail him as a god.

How long, O God! how long
Shall Conscience bow its majesty to man,
And speech be dumb before an ancient Lie—
Fair Freedom strangled by the Bigot's ban,
Which sanctifies the Wrong?
Elastic Thought lives in perennial Youth;
Opinions are but accidents; the Truth
Alone can never die.

Thought's Inquisition ever
Was answered by the faggot of Old Time,
And grim death-dungeons, with strange coffin-doors.
Man may be governed by the Truth sublime;
But Truth is governed never.
She moults her peaceful plumes in flame and fire;
And, from the ashes of her Altar-pyre,
She like a Phœnix soars.

Dawn swiftly, glorious Day,
When Earth from feuds of Faith shall find repose;
When, throned in light, Religion pure shall reign;
When Superstition's tyrannies shall close,
And Truth its sceptre sway;
When Intellect shall vanquish proud Misrule;
When kingly Thought and loyal Love shall rule,
And snap the Priestly chain!

WITH THOSE WE LOVE.

WITH those we love how sweetly pass the hours!
Time seems to glide in music 'mid the Flowers.
The world-seared Heart seems bathed in freshening dew,
Linked in sweet union with the Friends proved true.
'Tis then we feel, by Love and Truth refined,
That Life is all too short for deeds unkind.

With those we love how sweetly pass the hours,
From all the world aloof in hallowed bowers.
Home, blest Home, is aye the downy nest
Where the Soul's weary, sinking wing may rest;
And smooth appears the rugged road we tread,
If Home before us lifts its smiling head.

With those we love how sweetly pass the hours!
Through balmy eves what guileless Joy is ours!
When Wisdom opes her casket's precious lore,
And Fancy plumes her cheery wings to soar;
When lips in transport stir to converse sweet,
Then Life's a harp for Angel-fingers meet.

With those we love how sweetly pass the hours,
When, like the Bee, we sip Affection's flowers!
We gather round us, in Love's fairy ring,
Those who by Faith's sweet-scented tendrils cling,
And Hearts are honey-combs of sweetness rare,
The Hive and Home of tender trust and care.

With those we love how sweetly pass the hours!
What harbourage so dear from storms and showers?
From gentle eyes we quaff the wine of Thought,
And feed Hope's lamp with oil of gladness wrought;
And what were Wealth from social joys apart?
And what were Life without a loving heart?
With those we love how sweetly pass the hours!
Long may they live to strew our path with flowers!
But if we first shall end Life's brittle lease,
Oh, may they kiss our dying lips to peace!
And when our Spirits soar to realms above,
May our last smile light upon those we love!

THE SCEPTIC AND THE RAVEN.

A RAVEN, with a sleek black poll,
One Summer's eve beheld uproll
A Storm in fiery rings;
The rapid lightnings flamed afar,
Under God's eaves wrought star by star,
Like swallow's glittering wings.

The Raven saw the scowling Sky,
And in a Church's turret high
He sheltered from the Storm:
All night he gloomily did rest
Within the turret's ample nest
His dark and ghostly form.

Perchance the Raven, perched aloft,
Dreamed of nooks green and feathery soft,
And flower-lips honey-sweet;
Or of the ash-tree's ghastly shade,
And weedy pools which toads invade,
Or darker crime's retreat.

Next Morn was Sunday, and the rain
Mist-curtains hung o'er hill and plain,
And in the Church there kneeled
Of worshippers a saintly throng,
And through the arch the sacred song
With organ music pealed.

Superbly rolled the organ's tone,
And gorgeously the oriels shone
With rare device and quaint;
But never Church or chapel had,
Than he in mournful vesture clad,
A more devoted saint.

The aisles and altar seemed alive
With murmurs like a golden hive,
Startling the mystic Bird;
But there he sat like a queen-bee,
Quaffing the vocal melody
Which from the Choir he heard.

Within the Pulpit's narrow space
The Pastor took his wonted place,
To scatter truth abroad:
With gentle hands he oped the Book,
Then read his text with earnest look—
"Prepare to meet thy God."

With zeal he urged the sacred plea,
And cold indeed the heart must be
That warmed not as it ran;
For every sentiment was fraught
With gracious love and tender thought
Of God's behest to man.

No flames of Fancy on the wing,
In Intellect's vain glorying,
His sermon did adorn;
For Death with blossoms crowns his head—
With withered leaves and rose-buds red,
As well as ripened corn.

And though each image that he drew
Of fleeting Life was neither new,
Nor eloquent, nor odd,
Yet to the Soul his language spoke,
As at each closing clause there broke—
"Prepare to meet thy God."

Then grander rose those turret towers
Than Nature's incense-breathing bowers,
As down the Raven gazed;
He heard each sentence wide expand,
Its meaning seemed to understand,
And stood with awe amazed.

The lucid cadence of each word
The wingèd air bore to the Bird
Within his strange abode;
Though not each varied train of thought,
The Raven in the turret caught—
"Prepare to meet thy God."

The Crowd had vanished, and no din
Of voice or music stirred within
That Gospel-hallowed spot;
The Raven, too, had fled away,
But the sacred text he heard that day
Was ne'er by him forgot.

At eve a Sceptic roamed the woods,
'Mid blowing blossoms, breath of buds;
A thoughtful man was he—
And in the hearts of men, the worst,
There is a spark Divine may burst
In immortality.

In all the Sylvan garden walks
The Flowers, like babes, dreamed on their stalks,
And Birds with folded wing,
Of Night's gloom into splendour riven,
When on the purple top of heaven
The rosy Dawn would spring.

The Stars, like golden bees, swarmed round
Their queen, the Moon; the blue profound
With worlds, like Flowers, was strown;
It seemed like a god's bridal robe,
Spangled with many a jewel-globe,
In glory flowing down.

Meanwhile the Raven, fierce and free,
Was perched upon a hollow tree,
'Neath which the Sceptic trod;
And as in murmuring tones he spoke,
It uttered with its dismal croak—
"Prepare to meet thy God."

The Sceptic glanced with fear around
On starry sky and moonlit ground
But nothing saw he there;
Till from the tree a blazing eye
Glared like some demon's, to defy
His progress to its lair.

As if an Angel's trump had blown,
Those fearful words fell pealing down
The leafy canopy.
A terror vague crept through his frame;
But still there burned the demon flame
Up in the ghostly tree.

Fired into scorn, the Sceptic said,
"Bird, hide thy grim portentous head."
The Raven's eye still glowed
Amid the branches of the tree,
And to the Sceptic's voice said he—
"Prepare to meet thy God."

The silence and serenity
Which wrapt the sleeping Land and Sea,
But sanctified the hour;
No sound broke on the stillness, save
The Sea-bird winging o'er the wave,
The stray Moth through the bower.

His footsteps thence he homeward bent
Beneath the frescoed firmament,
Musing wonderingly—
Had Heaven some Angel presence screened,
Or Hell released some mocking Fiend,
To bend his stubborn knee.

Philosophy's vain phantasies,
And Reason with conceited guise,
Were idle to respond;
At length he reached his Cottage door,
Whose taper light shone faintly o'er
The swarded path beyond.

There slept his beauteous darling Child,
Who like a dying sunbeam smiled—
The omen did not fail—
She lay upon her little bed,
Drooping her languid golden head,
As Winter's snow-drift pale.

But round her lingered such a grace,
The moonlight on her saintly face
Some Angel might have been—
And touched her into loveliness,
Unloosing every shining tress
About her brows serene.

That Angel guest was in her heart;
For suddenly with lips apart,
Her voice seraphic flowed,
And with an accent calm and clear,
She whispered in her Father's ear—
"Prepare to meet thy God."

The boon was claimed which God had given:
Another Angel sang in Heaven;
Christ walked His garden through
To deck His glorious diadem;
He saw the Rose-bud on the stem,
And plucked it for its dew.

No pageantry of sounding deeds,
To overrule for good, He needs
Who doth Creation fill—
The wingèd insect, sea-born flower,
The Raven He may give the power
To speak His Sovereign will.

LEGEND OF THE SCOTTISH VICTIMS.

It is recorded that in the days of the Druids there stood a little church on the Derbyshire Peak, in which the marriage ceremony was performed for fugitive lovers, after the manner of Gretna Green. The Author visited the spot where the tragedy is said to have been enacted. The locality is wild, rugged, and picturesque.

'Twas in the noon of rosy June;
The Flowers with diamond drops were hung:
The Birds among the bushes sung,
And woods and groves were all in tune.
The Dawn was dight in golden curls;
Her dainty feet tripped through the bowers;
Her rosiest smile played o'er her flowers,
And silver strings of twinkling pearls.

The meads were rich as jewel-mines,
The wild rose-briers with buds were strung,
O'er cowslip vales the Skylark sung,
And bees were roving libertines.
The Sunbeams hung in blazing sheaves,
Among the glad, breeze-billowed Corn
The rich-hued Butterfly was born,
And soft Winds kissed the panting leaves.

From kingly oak and queenly lime,
From gardens high and woodlands dim,
The Cuckoo sang his plaintive hymn
O'er odorous banks of sweet wild-thyme.
The amorous Sea toyed with the Sand,
Who proudly spurned his silver locks;
He dashed his jewels 'gainst the rocks,
Despairing of her lily-hand.

The step of Age elastic grew,
The cheek of Youth with crimson flushed,
The wail of stricken Hope was hushed,
And hearts seemed made for loving true.
Young Children wandered far and near;
For Heaven spread o'er them its soft palm,
Like Christ of old: they heard Earth's psalm
Gush from the woods like jocund Deer.

Glad Day of light! bright were thy bowers,
And Earth and Sky were both in tune,
In the gorgeous noon of merry June,
When lips of Childhood kissed the Flowers.
Through leafy lanes, by fields and meads,
Where roses peered from hedges green,
Two stately forms of noble mien
Rode proudly on two pearl-white steeds.

Knew not the Villagers their names;
Their Tartan garb pronounced the clime
Where Lochs repose 'neath hills sublime,
With heather crowned like cloudy flames.
His hyacinthine beauty made
A graceful contrast with her form,
Which, like a Lily's, white and warm,
Rose in his kingly smile arrayed.

Rare music from her sweet mouth rose;
Her high, white forehead beamed through curls
Beclasped with braids of glittering pearls;
And gems adorned her saddle-bows.
The silken fringes of her eyes
Beneath her arching eyebrows shone,
Like sunset rays the snow upon,
And struck beholders with surprise.

Their tender yet impassioned play
The haughtiest heart could set a-glow;
Her rich, brown ringlets o'er her brow
Like mountain Eaglet's plumage lay.
As the Volcano's crust may hide
The flame that bursts with deathly hail,
Beneath that Maiden's face so pale
Was shrined a Soul of fire and pride.

The daughter of some Scottish Chief,
Of noble birth and blood was she.
His was a humbler pedigree;
And Love's sole heritage was grief.
But Redmond's heart was nobly born;
His soul by adverse fates was stung;
The Rose of Love in glory sprung,
Where Suffering's iron plough had torn.

Beauty and Wealth, and Pride and Fame,
Were Jessie's, and the bloom of youth;
And Redmond owned a Soul of truth,
Chivalrous love, and spotless name.
As in his Boyhood's wild young glee
He braved the Eagle's glance of flame,
In Manhood he aspired to claim
That Maiden fair of high degree.

Her Father sought to link her hand
To one her Heart disowned with pride:
She fled to be her Redmond's Bride;
And thus she found the Stranger's land.
No royal road hath Love or Worth:
As honeysuckles wildly climb
O'er lowly wall or noble lime,
Love disregards the chance of birth.

Fates, stern and diverse, linked the Pair.
Thus glided these two lives in one,
As flow the Avre and the Rhone,
The dark stream mingling with the fair.
She left her noble halls of pride,
The land of bloom she loved the best,
Her Father's arms, her Mother's breast,
To be her dearer Redmond's Bride.

Their prancing Steeds, with silken manes,
Dashed through the Village glad and gay;
The glittering pageant passed away
'Mid ringing hoofs and clattering reins.
Already Jessie seemed a Bride;
And merry fêtes and garlands green,
And Cherubs fair as e'er were seen,
The Village Maidens prophesied.

Oh! Love will breast the stormiest wave
  To gain the fond Hesperian Isle—
  To win one beam of Beauty's smile;
For Love can make the coward brave.
Love only to itself is true;
  In no warm heart love ever died;
  We mourn by Love's grave crucified,
And, lo! it bursts to life anew.

Crossed Love is like the trodden snow,
  Which mounts the Skies to fall again
  In beautifying dew and rain,
And wreathe with Flowers Spring's bonny brow.
Deep in the heart strikes Love's torn root
  When adverse winds in anger blow;
  The sap burns in each yearning bough,
And bears, at last, immortal Fruit.

They saw the Church they came to seek,
  As on they rode with heedless rein;
  And sad thoughts brooded in each brain,
While gloomed the shadow of the Peak.
Then Home, with all its virgin Dreams
  And holy Pleasures, radiant rose:
  These Saxon hills were tame to those
Old Scottish mountains veined with streams.

"Adieu," they sighed, "ye cloudy Crags!
  Adieu, ye glorious Lochs, to you!
  Ye rainbow-plaided Hills, adieu!
And Rivers leaping like chased stags!
Ye warbling Birds of wood and glen,
  Sweet pibroch and loud echoing horn,
  Scenes of the Land where we were born,
We may not feel your charms again!

"Land of the brave, the true, the tried;
  Cradle of Hero-names sublime;
  Grand heir-looms that command All-Time,
And fill and whelm our hearts with pride;
Though gorgeous be the Southern Isle,
  Thine is a clime of richer bloom;
  For genius, glory, love illume
Thy realm with their immortal smile.

"Those clumps of heather grandly crown
  The graves of those who fought and bled,
  Like Heaven's glad Iris overhead
When clouds on wings of Death come down.
The angel Freedom, fair and young,
  In token of divinelier days,
  Planted upon thy hills and braes
The glorious Thistle, stern and strong.

"Adieu, ye legend-breathing vales!
  Historic memories round ye throng
  Of all the Past, so red and long!
Oh! ye have told us solemn tales!
Our hearts shall be to Scotia true;
  For her our ceaseless prayers shall yearn:
  Till to thy bosom we return,
Adieu, beloved Land, adieu!"

Now solemnly the crescent Moon
  Hung her white banner o'er the hill!
  The awe-struck rocks stood black and still;
Stars walked the Sky in golden shoon.
Like suitors for a Virgin's smile,
  Star vied with Star to look divine!
  The Moon seemed like a Pilgrim's shrine,
A silver Ark, a blessèd Isle,

Heaven's gates of glory oped anew;
  Transfiguring splendour flowed through gloom;
  The Earth was robed in silver bloom,
The largess of rich-misted dew.
O'er all the Peak a wondrous calm
  Hung like the wings of brooding Dove;
  And Saint-like eyes peered out above,
Whose precious tears were drops of balm.

While whispering love-tones, soft and low,
  They gained the craggy Peak sublime,—
  The Manuscript of ancient Time:
The scattered Village lay below.
The wild Birds sang, the Lapwing screamed;
  Along the Gorges mystic twined
  The fabled Portals of the Wind,
Where clouds like snow-white banners streamed.

Then Redmond kissed his Jessie's brow:
  Presentiments made sad her breast,
  Which palpitated like a nest;
For she was faint with travel now.
The music of his voice allayed
  Her trembling fears, and lit anew
  The hungry Dark with Love's sweet dew;
For dim forebodings seized the Maid.

She seemed to hear her Father's prayer,
  As Eve-like Memory wandered back;
  Her Mother's smile illumed her track
Above the Gulf-stream of Despair.
Golden maple and ivied elm,
  And heather-mantled hill and glen,
  Rose glorified by absence then,
Of smiling Joy the happy realm.

But ah! she Home would soon return,
  Like a tossed Bark that furls its wings,
  Moored after wayward wanderings,
Where Stars like winged seraphs burn.
Delusive all Hope's pleasing trance.
  Alas! Fate waved her magic wand
  To disenchant their fairy land,
And earthward dashed Love's grand romance.

While loitering through the Village lane,
  Four Ruffians saw the peerless Pair:
  Said one, "These wealthy Strangers are;"
Another, "Let them both be slain."
Those awful rocks rose grouped to view,
  And every sense of terror moved;
  A scene Salvator Rosa loved,
Forms like dark-visioned Raphael drew.

Black gloomed the gulfs, like dragon's jaws;
  Wolf-like the Darkness crossed their track
  And down the Glen the cataract
Leaped, thundering without a pause.
High o'er the mountain's jaggèd edge
  The moonbeams wove a rich galloon;
  Up through the Peaks appeared the Moon,
'Tween chasms, like a silver wedge.

That Night those forms of Angel mould,
In Luxury's lap of blessings born,
Were from their pearl-white Palfreys torn,
By cruel hands, for cursèd gold.
Love-strengthened, Redmond fought each knave,
And two lives answered for his own.
He died, with Mercy's pleading tone
Upon his lips, the Maid to save.

But Beauty, with its tingling flame,
Ne'er thrilled the Heart that lusts for greed:
Gold crushes bosoms warm that bleed
Into his jewelled Cup of shame.
With his last ebbing breath he sighed,
"Take all our gold and jewels rare;
But save my Jessie! Spare, oh! spare
A Parent's hope; my Love, my Pride!"

The Ruffians twain then Jessie led
To die, in all her Maiden grace;
Heaven sadly smiling in her face,
She drooped her strangely-beauteous head.
There, like a plumeless, stricken Dove,
She lay, blood-stained, far in the dell:
By dagger-thrust the Victims fell,
While frowned avenging Heaven above.

And now there came the balmiest rest;
The Moon stooped from her Heaven of bliss
So tenderly with pitying kiss;
Night's silver shroud enclasped each breast.
Two pearl-white Steeds still haunt the dell,
Each mounted by a Spectral Form,
With gory manes, in calm, in storm,
Where these fair Scottish Victims fell.

THE BATTLE OF BELIEF.

A REPLY TO AN EPICUREAN AND ATHEISTICAL PERSIAN POET.

INSCRIBED TO THE REV. S. J. WALLIS.

WELL, be it so. I envy not your taste,
If meat you like in Epicurean fashion,
And Wine attracts your gay and wild-fire passion;
For nothing in the World can run to waste.
The merry Worm will riot on the flesh
That fattens on luxurious Drink and Food:
So fill your Goblet from the Vintage flood,
And let your dish of Ortolans be fresh.

Are they such novel maxims, "Live to eat,"
"Drink and be glad," that you should be their Singer,
While Sybaritic Swains at Banquets linger,
Until their heads go rolling at their feet?
If this be all, then every wallowing Beast
Than Man is greater in the Sensual Stye,
And every Babbler may give God the lie,
Because the Brutes surpass him at the Feast.

Thine be the Shrines where Venus incense burns,
Thine be the Kisses of the ardent Lover;
But ah! methinks thou wilt ere long discover
That Life hath nobler and more blest concerns.
For thus on splendid Vice to waste thy breath,
From every judgment of the Conscience freed,
Pursuit of Pleasure paramount, indeed
Would make a Tragedy of Life and Death.

Why at God's goodness wouldst thou then repine,
When He with Grapes and Fruitage crowns thy board?
Wouldst make this temple of the living Lord
A glorious Paradise for feeding Swine?
See how He pours out plenty like a river
On this Elysium, where reels the Sot.
Oh! why didst thou thy disc of glory blot,
To share the Banquet and then curse the Giver?

Thy Music bringeth like the Summer breeze
The pilfered odours of a thousand flowers:
Was it for this He gave thee noble powers,
To teach thy King to live a Life of ease?
May not our Joys in purer channels run,
From crystal Fountains, where the Song-bird sips,
Refreshing fainting hearts and fevered lips,
While Cheerfulness inspires Life's inner Sun?

The Cup, with no absinthian dregs to drain,
Is lawful Love for all that's Pure and True:
Strong Intellect can adverse Fate subdue,
And sweet Religion is the balm of Pain.
Methinks a nobler task thy Muse might find,
To make Life beautiful to Youth and Age,
In moral fascinations that engage
The Heart, and Thoughts which elevate the Mind;

In luring Man to Nature's brooks and bowers,
Enamoured with their beauties scattered far,
In sweet communings with the Moon and Star,
And healing balsams of the Herbs and Flowers;
In gilding shaded Homes with sunny smiles,
In singing Songs to cheer the People's march,
Bearing beneath high Heaven's triumphal Arch
Truth's Banner to a thousand darkened Isles.

THE BEING OF GOD.

Of God we nothing know! Then whence this Frame
Of Use and Beauty that Design displays?
And whence those Worlds of constellated rays
Which Goodness and Omnipotence proclaim?
The Eye was formed for Light, the Ear for Sound,
Before they passed the wondrous gate of Birth;
And many mystic Gifts may blossom forth
In that Hereafter whither all are bound.

Nought but Intelligence and Love Supreme
Could shape the Means to Nature's happy Ends.
The tidal Sea and solid Earth are friends,
And Sun and Moon reveal their Parent-Beam.
If Chance, without one law its course to guide,
Can out of Chaos rise and keep in view
This Oneness, Fitness, and Connection due,
Then worship Chance and be a God denied!

Seems not each Floweret with pre-purpose born?
Not all the dreams of Philosophic Schools,
Nor all the Schemes of Academic Rules,
Can make one Blade of Grass, one Ear of Corn.
Lift up thine eyes to yonder spangled Arch,
Where shines the Moon and many a twinkling Star;
To sight they form a limit and a bar:
But Thought can trace Beyond a grander March.

So through the Veil which hides the Infinite,
The Soul by Consciousness of Him may learn,
And with the Spiritual Eye discern
His Wisdom, Glory, Majesty, and Might.
And all this glorious Edifice of skill
Is fitted up for Man with roofs of Light,
And floors of Flowers, to minister Delight.
Oh! speaks it not of Love and Goodness still?

And are the Pleasures of To-Day alone
Our narrow Dream? Or ought we in the Now
With gradual glory gild the beaming brow,
To reign as Kings on the To-morrow's Throne?
I hear a Star's voice singing, "Soul, arise,
And scale the Heavens." I hear the Summer-Birds
In their ascension utter the same words,
While Rose and Ringdove mingle happy sighs.

THE GOODNESS OF GOD.

That God is good is written everywhere;
His goodness flashes from the thunder-cloud;
It nestles in the Flower, in worship bowed,
And chirpeth in the Robin's winter prayer.
It smiles from every Star that gems the sky;
It dances in the Sun's swift-footed beam;
It laughs along the rippling wave and stream;
And twinkles merrily in Childhood's eye.

That God is good is seen in noble lives.
Those sweet Examples with devotion dowered—
Paul, Plato, Zeno, Socrates, and Howard,
Whose God-like love the wreck of thrones survives.
That God is good is writ on land and main;
For the All-wise must be All-goodness too.
In Moral ills we Moral weakness view,
And Error bringeth Evil in its train.

That God is good each beating heart reveals,
In love of Life, however short its span.
Where on God's earth doth breathe the *hopeless man*
Who spurns the Bliss of Being that he feels?
Who knoweth all the laws of Nature yet?
Reason must kiss His footstool ere it rise
To mount His throne who rules us from the skies.
What! shall a Finite Mind His limit set?

Man's Will to choose is Free. His Mind enshrines
The Carnal and the Moral—two extremes.
Antagonisms meet, like clouds and beams,
And gold and dross deep in the murky mines.
Man's Life is one fierce struggle to the Light;
And step by step he marches to the mark,
By precipices hidden in the dark,
With Fiends and Lions on the left and right.

Life's pupilage for an Eternal Home
Is this grand ladder by which Man ascends:
God for his Father, Angels for his Friends,
And Shielding-Spirits when his feet would roam.
A Future-State then cannot be a Dream.
Life is not broken off when just begun
At fourscore years to blossom in the Sun.
Death is not final—Heaven completes the scheme.

If we would use our highest, holiest powers,
These luminous Truths o'er all the Earth to spread,
The Shibboleths of Sects would soon be fled,
The hoped-for New Arcadian Age be ours.
Like the Egyptian Pyramids they stand
To Desert-Travellers—o'er storm and strife,
Before us in the Wilderness of Life,
Sun-crowned, distinctly visible, and grand!

THE LOVED NOT LOST.

Yes, some we loved are gone to sleep. What then?
Men sleep and wake, but how we cannot tell;
A Butterfly dissolves the wondrous spell,
And, lo! the Mind returns to Thought again.
How sinks the Soul in slumber soft and still,
Albeit no function of the Body sleeps?
While every Sense is locked it smiles, and weeps,
Or dreams and wanders wheresoe'er it will.

Who knows, therefore, the Ideal from the True?
The Soul from Death's transition soars for ever,
Beyond the waves of Life's fast-flowing River,
With those dear Hearts whom on the Earth it knew.
The Spirit sees, from yon ethereal Dome,
How poor were all the Joys at Life's command,
As to the Swineherd, in the Famine-Land,
The husks while wandering from his Father's Home.

Methinks the Zephyrs round my brow that wave,
Beloved Bride, are breathings from above,
Of those pure lips that spake in words of love,
Hossanahs singing, risen from the Grave.

Methinks the Flowerets which the Children cull
From yonder spot where Mother's dust is laid,
Are Spirit-Tokens of her Love, displayed
In symbols, holy, chaste, and beautiful.

Methinks the Skylark in the beam that floats
Sings of the sweet light-hearted Child we lost,
As o'er Life's sorrow-swollen stream we crossed,
And, oh! the rapture of those welcome notes!
And while I feel this yearning so divine,
This faith in God, the all-inspiring Soul,
I will not grope in darkness like the mole,
Nor dim its brightness by the fumes of Wine.

Hark! hark! dear Friend, the Christmas-Bells are ringing:
It is the Festival ordained above:
It is the Birthday of the Lord of Love;
His Natal-Ode the Robin now is singing.
Sing, Robin, sing! and let thy bosom thrill;
For half I think the pretty Legend true,
That first thy breast received its crimson hue
While perched upon His Cross on Calvary's Hill.

THE FISHING EAGLE.

By the Northern coast of England,
On the golden border-land,
Once there dwelt a youth,—an Orphan,—
Whom hopeless grief unmanned.
Lone and friendless on he wandered,
Gazing at the mountain's crest,
Where, as in a soldier's helmet,
Gleamed a Fishing Eagle's nest.

Flapped their wings the callow Eaglets
In the red declining sun,
Flashed their eyes, and beaks, and plumage,
In the rolling vapours dun.
Then, amid the dense clouds flying,
Swooped the Mother Eagle strong,
With a huge fish in her talons,
As she skimmed the coast along.

Some labourers in the valley,
Beside the old red Farm,
From her talons scared the treasure,
By many a shrill alarm;
But again she bent her pinions
For the Sea, seven miles or more,
And again, clasped in her talons,
Another prize she bore.

But the ploughmen in the valley,
Regardless of her toil,
In their selfish want of feeling,
Still robbed her of her spoil;
But the crown of perseverance
The Eagle won at last.
With bolder flight upsoaring,
Beyond their reach she passed.

"Oh! brave Eagle of the mountain,"
Exclaimed that Orphan-boy,
"Through life's struggles I'll remember
Thy labour, love, and joy."
Hope in his breast new-kindled,
He won at length a name;
And never one shone brighter
In all the lists of fame.

THE HERO OF THE CLYDE.

James Lambert, of Glasgow, who is now an old, blind man, by trade a spinner in a cotton mill, at the risk of his own life, has saved upwards of forty people from drowning in the Clyde. History does not furnish a nobler example of self-sacrifice.

While of the deeds of Kings and Chiefs,
In days of yore, we sing,
To those whose Hero-hearts still beat
We 'll wake the sounding string:
And foremost 'mong those daring souls,
Of great and glorious fame,
Write on the scroll of golden deeds
James Lambert's honoured name.

Poor struggling women, men, and babes,
Swept seaward by the flood,
Or where had broke the treacherous ice,
The Hero bravely stood.
And like some messenger from heaven
He sprang into the tide,
And lives he snatched from watery graves,
That Hero of the Clyde.

Hark! hark! a cry both loud and shrill,
"Help, help, oh, God above!
I sink, I drown, oh, save me! save,
In mercy and in love!"
Look! yonder swarthy son of toil
Has heard their wild appeal,
And to their rescue at a bound
He quits his spinning wheel.

He wore no shield, or sword, or crest,
No blazoned banner brave;
Where rose the cry of drowning lives
He flung his own to save.
And long as gallant deeds are prized,
And good examples praised,
Be to the Hero of the Clyde
Our glad thanksgivings raised.

Not brave Horatius, he who kept
The wooden bridge of old,
Nor Priam's Son himself e'er wore
A grandeur half so bold;
For he has flashed o'er later times
A glory like the noon,
Well worthy of those ancient Kings
Crowned in the chair of Scoon.

Old, poor, and blind, without a friend,
Oh! shall he be forgot,—
He who hath with his prowess crowned
The land of Burns and Scott?
The Romans saved their Chief from want,
When he had lost a limb;
Our Hero bright has lost his sight,
Oh! let us care for him.

CAROLS OF CROSSES AND CROWNS.

Inscribed

TO MY BELOVED DAUGHTER,

MARY RUTH CHADWICK,

AS A TOKEN OF UNCHANGING LOVE AND AFFECTION.

SONG BY THE INGLE NOOK.

ANOTHER Old Year,
Friend, is dying,
The Angels are weaving his pall:
Away with all weeping
and sighing;
For this is the fate of
us all.

Hark! hark! to the merry peals swelling;
Oh! let us together be gay,
Ere Death at the door of our dwelling
Shall tap, and invite us away.
Come, let us partake of good cheer,
And make the fire merrily blaze:
Health and wealth and a Happy New Year,
And Heaven at the end of your days.

Fill flagons, and pass round the table;
Too soon will the moments be gone.
Let Love, like a submarine cable,
Unite every heart into one.
To those who have wronged us give pity,
Sweet tribute with jewels impearled;
And sing for our country a ditty,
The bravest and best in the world.
Though the leaves are all yellow and sere,
A glory around it still plays:
Health and wealth and a Happy New Year,
And Heaven at the end of your days!

Oh! keep your heart fresh and untainted,
And harbour no hate or distrust;
For few are as black as they 're painted,
And all will be white in the dust.
Learn to be poor, and despair not,
Since every stream has a fall;
For rank and distinction to care not,
While Love is the monarch of all.
Here 's long life to the Friend that 's sincere,
Though lowly the part that he plays:
Health and wealth and a Happy New Year,
And Heaven at the end of his days!

THE POET'S CHRISTMAS.

'T WAS the festival Christmas-time,
The Robin his prelude sung,
And petals of frost and rime
On the holly branches hung.
Homes rang with Music's glad sound,
And the viands rich were stored,
And frolic and fun went round
The sumptuous Christmas board.

The Young of their bridals dreamed,
When the happy Bells would ring;
And the eyes of the Aged gleamed,
With thoughts of another Spring.
The Poor crept into their beds,
To forget their hunger and cold,
Wrapping their sorrowful heads
In Oblivion's balmy fold.

Ah! then, as I sate alone,
And glee-songs rippled the air,
I thought of the pleasures flown
With the golden years that were.

For the loved and the lost I sighed,
My fancies were flying free,
And I dreamed of a world untried
In the years that were to be.

A cloud did around me float,
Like the banner of Death it lowered,
And a sharp fierce agony smote
My heart like a Demon's sword.
I pictured my dear lost Child,
That kisses no more could wake;
And my grief grew great and wild,
Till I thought my heart would break.

A bright little circlet beamed
In my hand, a silken thing;
Like a morning dewdrop it gleamed
On Memory's darksome wing.
'T was a curl of witching grace,
That hung o'er my Cherub's brow;
That beautiful rosebud face,
Methinks I can see it now!

On the cameo fell a ray,
'T was a Friend's, well known to fame;
And I wondered, though far away,
If he thought of me the same.
Sun-brightness illumined his hair,
While tears did mine eyes suffuse;
And a promise of glory rare
On his brow flung rainbow-hues.

Ah! why did my fond Friends flee,
Who once with lip-fealty kneeled?
The same blast which stripped the tree,
The worms at its core revealed.
Their Friendship was like a flower,
Which lives more on smiles than tears;
But Hope came into my bower,
Like the Robin when frost appears.

With aching and burning head
I gazed on my pale-faced Wife;
For Fate, with a mingled thread,
Had woven our web of life.
The Stars were dim in the night;
No joy in our bosoms shone:
Eclipsed was each sunny light,
By our cheerless cold hearthstone.

Yes, "Home" is a thrilling sound,
That weaveth a mystic spell,
Which maketh the feelings bound
In an absent heart that dwell.
What pen can the scene portray,
Of a broken Home so drear,
When all has been swept away
By the heartless auctioneer?

My books were "gone," whose thought-fires
A beacon of glory made,
And the fuschia tree, on whose spires
Willie's pet canary played.
My Mother's portrait was sold,
In spite of my pleading prayer;
And my Wife's harp, strung with gold,
And poor Henry's rocking chair.

Ah! the hand of change passed o'er
The dial of Home's blest shrine,
Its images loved of yore,
Its altar, no longer mine.
From all I held near estranged,
I met with rebuke and frown;
But there was one heart unchanged,
Though Home's fairy bark went down.

My darling-divinities clung,
Like frozen lambs, to my side,
While over the road I sung,
With Chance for my only guide.
I oft had a vision wild
Of a Shape that walks by night,
Which blighted my floweret Child
On the wintry desert white.

No Home! on the wide, wide earth,
Beneath the shelterless sky!
No Home on a Stranger's hearth,
Where the weary hours crawl by!
Guided was Israel's host
By Heaven to the Promised Land,
But never a finger-post
"Home" pointed our little band.

Better the roof and the bed
Of the grave than strange lips curled:
I would rather my Babes were dead
Than wanderers o'er the world.
He who wept by Lazarus' grave,
And the sparrow's fall who heeds,
My little shorn lambs can save,
And bind up the heart that bleeds.

Then I improvised the songs,
I would sing in after years,
And Visions in dazzling throngs
Into glory touched my tears.
I said, "We shall hear joy-bells,
Sweet Wife, ring over our woes,
Ere the violets scent the dells
And the glossy crocus blows."

We kissed each stammering Child,
And strove to be glad and gay,
Till Midnight with moonbeams smiled,
And we all knelt down to pray.
Above us the Moon's pearl-car
Rode on bejewelled with dew,
And a tenderly-twinkling star
The window-pane glimmered through.

LISTENING TO CHRISTMAS BELLS.

CHRISTMAS is here!
What say the Bells
In Old Time's ear,
While their jubilant melody sinks and swells?
Recall thou the Past ere the year shall depart:
Has Charity found a bright home in thy heart?
Has Mercy sped forth like a comforting dove
O'er the dark waves of Life on its errand of love?

Has Hope cast its anchor where billows ne'er roll?
Have Faith and Forgiveness their shrine in thy soul?
What snow-shroud of woe hast thou melted to mirth?
What light hast thou shed on the desolate hearth?
What flower hast thou planted so beauteous 'twas given
To blossom with infinite glory in heaven?
Christmas is here!

Christmas is here!
What say the Bells,
Ringing loud and clear,
Whose echoes, like sprites, fly o'er moorlands and fells?
Do they speak to thy memory's thrilling chords
Of ungenerous deeds and of bitter words?
Of duties neglected, of trust betrayed,
Of heartbreak and ruin by hatred made,
Of the clasping hands that are now estranged,
Of the faith that faltered, the love that changed,
Of a young flock scattered from Home's dear fold,
Of truth that was bartered for glittering gold,
Of sympathy's solacing balm unshed,
And a wreath whose leaves are all sullied or dead?
Christmas is here!

Christmas is here!
What say the Bells?
Some we held dear
Have passed o'er the hills where the Good Shepherd dwells,
To the fair land afar, to the Eden of love,
Not lost, but gone Home to their kindred above.
There 's a vacant chair, and a darkened door,
And a cradle that needs to be rocked no more.
Christmas comes round, and its blessedness cheers,
But we cannot see Heaven through the mists of tears.
Faith takes our hand, and her guidance we trust
Through the Valley of Fear, for our Father is just.
So let the dirge pass. Come, Children, in bands,
Be thankful and merry, and clap your wee hands.
Christmas is here!

Christmas is here!
Ring out, ye old Bells!
For I love to hear
Your musical peals with their joyous spells;
For they seem to fall from the starry spheres,
Like an Angel's song in a world of tears;
Enchanting my thoughts to the realms of bliss,
And a better and happier Home than this,
And to Him who was crowned the "Prince of Peace,"
That war, and oppression, and wrong might *cease.*

Oh! dawn on the world, thou glorious day
When monarchs the sceptre of Love shall sw
For Love, through Christ, is the king of all
And Love shall triumph when kingdoms f
Christmas is here!

GRANDMOTHER'S STORY OF TH BLACKBIRD.

COME, Love! I'll tell you a story,
And will not keep you long;
My head, as you see, is hoary,
And I'm almost too old for a song.
But the merry Bells are ringing,
To mind me of olden times;
And when I have long done singing,
The world will hear their chimes.

In girlhood I often wondered
Whither the Birds had fled,
When black clouds lightened and thunde
And Summer's rich bloom was dead.
In thatches, chimneys, and gables,
Towers, steeples, and hollow trees—
'Twas one of my childhood's fables
That they surely were hid in these.

I peered under hedges and brambles,
Each pitiless, freezing morn;
But in all my curious rambles
I found not a Bird forlorn.
Though my faith is somewhat shaken,
I cherished a hope of love,
That perchance the Angels had taken
The dear dead songsters above.

It was on a wintry morning early
I went to see Farmer Lees,
And the mistletoe berries pearly
Hung thick in the monarch trees.
We expected a letter from Fanny;
John in the Hospital lay;
And your beautiful cousin Annie
Was married that very day.

So down by the river going,
The Bells breaking out amain;
And the sun like a furnace glowing,
O'er snow-mantled hill and plain;
The gun of the sportsman sounded
Of many poor things the knell,
And a Blackbird circling, wounded
And stricken with panic, fell.

It grieved me to see it flutter
And quiver with pain and fear,
And a sob it seemed to utter—
Then sank on its icy bier.
"Poor harmless victim so tender
Of man, proud lord of the land,
What help to thee now can I render?"
I said, as it gasped in my hand.

I nestled it in my bosom,
A refuge from cold and strife;
Though withered were branch and bloss
It felt a new pulse of life.

I saw that its plumage glossy
  Was shot from its wounded wing,
And I thought of its nest so mossy,
  Its music and joy in Spring.

By the ingle-nook we laid it,
  In a nest of nice fresh hay,
And constant attention paid it,
  As cherub-like there it lay.
We bound up its wing half-broken,
  We wiped from its breast the stains,
And it sang a few notes in token
  Of gratitude for our pains.

"Dear little Blackbird," said Mary,
  "Happy you soon shall be,
Flying on pinions so airy
  Away to your greenwood tree;
Singing, and singing, and singing,
  As higher and higher you rise,
Where the sun-laughing flowers are springing,
  Greeting your mate in the skies.

"I will not your young wings fetter,
  Song-loving Bird of the air;
My ebony pet, you are better,
  No longer you need my care.
Fly, fly to your bower of beauty,
  For small is the help I've given—
A shelter in love and duty,
  And food in the name of Heaven."

But the Blackbird preferred its prison
  Whose bars were of gilded wires;
Yet seemed like a Spirit arisen
  From death to the sun's glad fires—
From a cold tomb of snow ascended
  An Angel of joy and song;
A child of the earth it befriended
  With music the whole day long.

It hung from the Hospital ceiling,
  A present to poor Uncle John,
And tears from his eyes came stealing,
  So gaily it warbled on:
He thought of bright hopes it chanted
  When *he* should be strong and well,
For long had his spirit panted
  For Home, with its joyous spell.

It sang for the sick and the wounded,
  With no sunny ray to cheer,
And the hearts of the patients bounded
  Its story so strange to hear.
For He who the Blackbird cherished,
  And sent a kind hand to save,
When, wounded, it might have perished,
  Would raise *them* up from the grave.

Ah! think, then, of those broken-hearted,
  Poor Birds of our streets and lanes,
From Home and its loved ones parted,
  For whom only death remains.
Ah! help the little ones, crying
  For food at your very door;
Save those lost Children from dying,
  And Heaven will bless your store.

THE MAIL-CART ON CHRISTMAS EVE.

A LITTLE ancient inland town,
  Far from the railway engine's shriek,
Begirt by many a moor and down
  And hollow dell and mountain peak—
'T was Christmas Eve: the Storm-King passed,
And there was vengeance in the blast.

Beside the old Post-Office door
  Stood Ben, the driver of the Mail,
The midnight clouds hung blackening o'er,
  And fiercely howled the wintry gale;
Huge snowdrifts buried rock and glen,
But stout of heart was stalwart Ben.

He smote his palms and stamped his feet,
  And blithely whistled, laughed, and sang;
While wind and sleet swept down the street,
  And merrily the Church Bells rang.
His honest heart, by love kept warm,
Feared not the fury of the storm.

Brave index of the British prime,
  With well-knit frame and sinewy hand,
Like those stern chiefs of olden time,
  Who shrank not from the foeman's brand.
His plighted vows had long been given
To one sweet maid as fair as heaven.

She dwelt full twenty miles away,
  Her parents kept the Village inn,
Next day would be the Wedding-day
  Of handsome Ben and charming Min;
He started gaily, blew his horn,
And hailed with joy his Bridal-morn.

Love's happy dream, his chestnut mare,
  His red Mail-Cart by all admired,
The Christmas treasures in his care
  His manly breast with valour fired;
He haply bore sweet words to thrill
Hearts, parted long, but faithful still.

"Ho! gently, startled steed!" said he,
  "Thy instinct 's safer than my sight
Through forests roaring like a sea,
  And chasms yawning left and right:
'Mid hurricanes of snow and hail,
We bear to night the Christmas Mail."

Through elbowed lanes as grim as Death,
  By thickets, pools, and gorges wide,
O'er-arched like a funeral wreath,
  The fiery courser dashed with pride.
Her head was grasped by four masked men.
"Hands off, ye Villains!" shouted Ben.

Ah, little knew that hideous crew
  The scythe-sweep of Ben's brawny arm,
When from his throne him down they drew,
  'Twas nerved by Love's resistless charm.
Back from his blows with curse and yell,
Three monsters in the deep ditch fell.

He dragged the other on his Cart,
  Grasping his gurgling throat, and bound
His hands and feet; then, like a dart,
  The steed flew o'er the frozen ground.

In Ben's strong grip the ruffian lay,
Just as a lion holds his prey.

Shot after shot flashed from the rear,
Too late to check his homeward speed;
One bullet whistled passed his ear,
Another struck his trembling steed.
He knew it not, for on she sped,
And by the Village inn fell dead.

And there stood Minnie at the door,
With horror stricken at the sight,
When from the wretch the mask she tore,
Whose features made her faint with fright.
That haggard, ghastly face she knew—
A Swain discarded met her view.

The steed lay stiffened in the snow,
Where foam and blood commingling ran;
And as Ben's tears began to flow,
The brute seemed nobler than the man;
He said, in sorrow's mournful tone,
"She 's saved my life and lost her own."

He set his Captive rival free:
For mercy is the precious gem
Our great All-Father loves to see
Bedeck the Christmas diadem.
Chime on, chime on, ye olden Bells!
Of Love Divine your music tells!

Fair dawned the merry Christmas morn,
The Bridegroom and the Bride to bless;
Rich jewels decked the brier and thorn,
And Winter wore his ermine dress.
Their Cottage crowns the Village dale,
And Ben still drives the Country Mail.

THE SAILOR'S FIRST VOYAGE.

BEAMED like a pearl the Fisher's cot,
Set in an emerald zone,
Half sheltered by the crags and cliffs,
And rugged mountains lone,
Amid whose hoar and cloudy tops
The eagles built their throne.

A dreary rock-bound Northern coast
'Mid ocean's wildest roar,
The sailor's dread, the sea-mew's haunt,
The smuggler's nest of yore;
An Eden Isle when Summer bloomed
Along the wave-beat shore.

And oft, amid the tempest's strife,
Rose shrieks and prayers profound,
Of many a gallant crew whose bark
Had struck while homeward-bound;
And there the Fisher's eldest Son
In view of Home was drowned.

And when at night the storm arose,
With noise of wind and rain,
The Fisher and his gentle Wife
Thought of their Boy again,
And lit a Beacon lamp, to shine
From one wee attic pane.

Voyagers o'er the midnight deep
Descried afar its rays;
They blest the Fisher's kindly heart
Whene'er they saw its blaze,
And thought how much one loving deed
May merit thanks and praise.

One sole surviving Son had they,
Who scorned to idle stand,
While Fame and Fortune beckoned youth
To every distant land;
Some spirit seaward seemed to point,
And guide him with its hand.

"Dear Mother," said that noble Boy,
With blue eyes, bright and bold,
"I love the stately Ship whose head
Is kissed by billows cold;
I 'll ask yon Captain for a berth,
And work to win you gold!"

"Well, say no more, don't break my heart,"
Said she, while tears flowed fast;
"Pride of my heart, prop of my age,
Wilt leave me, Boy, at last?
My blessings on thee! Oh! may God
For thee calm every blast.

"It is not gold we want, my Son,
But life without a stain;
The lust of gold round noble hearts
Entwines a demon's chain;
But, oh! bring back that honest face
When you have ploughed the main."

They parted soon. His Mother's tears
Fell in a copious shower;
His pious Father, wild with grief,
Prayed for him every hour;
And Edith, Rupert's sweetheart, seemed
Like Winter's frozen flower.

The swan-like Ship, with snow-white wings,
Sailed forth to climes afar;
And Rupert's name was on the roll,
A sturdy British tar;
But all his thoughts, like birds, flew home
When shone the Evening Star.

He saw the Cottage, ivy-clad,
The garden, rocks, and trees,
The little church, the boats, the nets,
The vane whirled by the breeze;
Fair Edith's face, his Mother's tears,
His Father on his knees.

The cruise was long; oft Home he wrote,
But not a word received;
The Postman who sought Edith's hand
Had basely them deceived,
And all at length, in sad despair,
That he was lost believed.

Five years on pinions fleet had flown
O'er Summer blossoms dead,
And Edith, now an orphan lone,
Watched by his Mother's bed;
His Father's face had haggard grown,
The smile of health had fled,

'Twas Christmas morn—a merry peal
Rang from the old Church Bells;
And up the hill a Bridal train
Breathed love's most hallowed spells;
And God's white rain, the beauteous snow,
Robed rocks, and roofs, and dells.

Then gazing forth across the bay
A huge Ship anchored near.
A boat was launched and quickly manned,
And bounded with a cheer
Toward the Cottage on the coast,
O'er waters sparkling clear.

A lusty Sailor leapt ashore
As inward rolled the tide;
His cheek was bronzed, his beard was grey,
And flowing long and wide;
And whiskers of enormous growth
His features seemed to hide.

They asked him if their Son he knew,
He stroked his beard, and then
Said, "Yes, my friends, I knew him well,
The kindest, best of men;
If you can trust an old man's word,
You 'll see his face again."

And oh, what far-brought things he spread
Before their wondering eyes;
Rich raiment, jewels, gold, and birds,
With plumes like rainbow dyes;
And when they heard the joyful news,
They mingled tears with sighs.

The Father grasped the Stranger's hand,
Even Edith closer drew,
The Mother cried, "Oh, aged man,
My Boy when shall I view?"
"Behold him now," the Sailor said,
And off his beard he threw.

Then Edith's cheek renewed its bloom,
The Mother tottering ran,
The Father vowed his long-lost Son
Had grown a handsome man,
The neighbours joined the social board,
And Christmas mirth began.

HYMN TO THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS.

SPIRIT of Christmas! eloquent art thou:
Of Charity and Peace thy presence tells:
And while thy white locks shimmer round thy brow,
Break into peals of gladness, dear old Bells!
'Tis morn; the clouds in roseate radiance roll.
Oh! thus may earthly cares and griefs take flight,
An inner sunshine bathe each suffering soul,
And thrill it with delight!

Spirit of Christmas, lo, the eastern skies
With signal-fires of Mercy are ablaze,
A smile of joy awakes in Morning's eyes,
And snows, like jewels, sparkle in its rays;
Thus Love transforms to gems the Outcast's tears,
To shine with glory in the Saviour's crown,
Dissolving with its smile the icy fears
Which bow the spirit down.

Spirit of Christmas! round the Christmas-tree
Let children throng—He blessed the infant band—
Let Age rejoice to join their sportive glee,
And hearty be the grasp of Friendship's hand.
Home's darlings sundered are for ever flown,
Lost as the spray that 's scattered on the shore;
Like floral fragments by the tempest strown,
We gather them no more.

Spirit of Christmas! faces dear we miss,
And voices that we loved are hushed for aye,
And lips are absent that we ne'er shall kiss,
Except in dreams by night and thoughts by day.
Chime on, ye Bells! and let the bough be hung
With pearly berries where Joy's circles meet;
Long live the season which to old and young
Doth bring such favours sweet!

Spirit of Christmas; snow spreads like a pall,
And Autumn's tints have faded from the scene;
But heavenly manna is the food of all
Whose hearts with love are ever fresh and green.
O Heart of Sorrow, in the darkness sing,
Though, freezing as it falls, descends the rain:
The blazing ingle-nook with mirth may ring,
If frost 's not in the brain.

Spirit of Christmas! hark! o'er ocean's foam,
From windy headlands, peal the Christmas Bells:
Each heart, on board yon Ship, that yearns for Home,
This magic hour with fond remembrance swells.
The white-lipped waves are whispering at the prow,
The moon-kissed sails like burnished pinions play—
Perchance of dear ones they are thinking now,
While listening in the bay.

Spirit of Christmas! either cup or mite,
That to the wretched and the poor is given,
Equals the gift of splendour in His sight,
And makes a link to bind the soul to Heaven.
Oh, take each day one stone from Misery's heap!
Oh, heal but one of all the hearts that ache!
Oh, dry one tear of all the eyes that weep,
For the Redeemer's sake!

CROSSES AND CROWNS.

EVERY heart has a Cross to bear,
And all the Crowns come unaware:
Seen through the Eye of Faith each trouble
Helps only to make our blessings double.

Poor at God's altar we both did stand,
And had no help from a human hand;
And we shall be parted, Love, ah! never,
Till Death shall our blended heartstrings sever.

The links of Love, by Wealth's fingers spun,
So gossamer-like, fade with the sun;
But those enwoven by care and sorrow
Grow stronger and truer every morrow.

And He who the rainbow weaves of showers,
And carpets the Earth with grass and flowers,
Can brighten with smiles the path before us,
Till age descend like a blessing o'er us.

We've had sometimes small heart for prayer.
The Heavens were brass in our despair;
But when we knelt at His holy altar
Our Cross grew light, and we did not falter.

His very scourge was wreathed with flowers,
And glowing gems of grace were ours,
If only we leaned to His Word and hearkened,
When the little coffin left Hope's door darkened.

Though this was the saddest note of all,
Oh! with what glory He lit the pall.
When our Babes in the cold, damp grave were sleeping,
More reason we saw for rejoicing than weeping.

Hope's gilded beams are too bright and brief,
Like Autumn's flush on the fading leaf:
Yet I fondly dream, in spite of our losses,
Somewhere may be Crowns for all our Crosses.

Then kinder I'll be to my dearest, and kinder,
Still to my breast I'll more tenderly bind her:
The smiles in her eyes no tears shall eclipse,
And billows of kisses shall break on her lips.

THE ANGEL OF PEACE.

METHOUGHT that the Angel of Peace from above
Came down to the world with her message of love.
Flowers, fadeless and fair, were entwined in her hair,
And a nimbus of crystalline splendour shone there.
Over Village and City she sped, and unrolled
A scroll richly blazoned with haloes and gold;
And the words in the centre were echoed again—
"Peace on the earth and goodwill towards men."

Forth straightway she went on her mission sublime,
Where stood the proud City—the queen of her time.
Her throne it was vacant—her crown left to rust—
And all her gay millions were humbled to dust.
The gates were all closed, and all silent the crowd;
The lily of empires with anguish was bowed.
As over the City her vigil she kept,
The Angel of Peace veiled her features and *wept.*

At length the horizon with glory seemed riven,
And dark clouds were gilded with rose-hues of heaven,
For the Angel of Peace gazed appalled o'er the plains,
Where Vengeance had given to Slaughter the reins,
And blew from the trumpet she held such a blast
That the ranks of the foes made a truce as she passed;
And she traced in the snow, with a luminous pen,
"Peace on the earth and goodwill towards men."

Then methought that the Olive united the lands,
And victor and vanquished in friendship shook hands;
And both had been brave, and chivalrous, and strong;
Yet battles, when lost or when won, must be wrong,
And truth and humanity urged the decree,
That War, the dread slayer, for ever should flee.
The two rival nations, from hatred beguiled,
Looked up in the face of the Angel and smiled.

Both empires shook off the black robes of despair,
And the songs of their minstrels were borne on the air.
Where War's scarlet mantle had covered the plain,
In sunny sheaves reapers were piling the grain;
Where thundered the cannon, and flashed the red brands,
The mowers were chanting to scythes in their hands.
The bastions, once blazing, became Summer bowers,
And battle-cleft helmets were vases for flowers.

The doves built their nests in the groves and the woods,
And hedgerows were blushing with blossoms and buds.
The white fleecy lambs in the deep meadows lay,
And groups of glad Children went thither to play.
The young men and maidens were breathing their vows
Under garlands of laurel and green olive-boughs,
For the Angel of Peace, from her pure azure throne,
Had girdled the world with her beautiful zone.

Great God of the Universe, prosper and bless
The Angel sent forth to the Homes of distress,
To comfort the mourning, the stricken to raise,
And Thine shall be ever the glory and praise!

LOST IN THE SNOWSTORM.

It was Christmas Eve: the red roses were dying
Of Sunset along the pale west in their bloom;
O'er the crag-covered caverns the Seamew was crying,
And winds sang a dirge o'er the mariner's tomb.

Across the bleak moorlands a Wanderer weary,
With silver locks fluttering wild in the gale,
Pursued his lone pilgrimage, dismal and dreary,
And only his dog sympathized with his wail.

"Alas!" sighed the Pilgrim, "I am old and forsaken,
The friends of my youth are like Autumn leaves fled;
My cherished spring-blossoms in childhood were taken,
And wintry storms break o'er my shelterless head.

"One floweret of love was left blooming, my Daughter,
Stern Fate rifled from me my violet sweet;
Heaven knows how I loved her, yet vainly I've sought her—
Oh, could I but breathe my last gasp at her feet!

"Ah! why hast thou spared me, great Father in Heaven?
Each Joy-well is dry in Life's desert of care;
Oh, had I but died, by Thy mercy forgiven,
When pages, now blotted, were stainless and fair!

"A light from yon Castle is cheerfully gleaming—
But, ah! the bright beacon for me does not burn;
Aloft from the turret a banner is streaming—
Oh, where in the darkness for help shall I turn?

"Hark! hark! at the festival revellers singing,
The Christmas-tree blossoms 'mid frolic and fun;
While homeless we wander, the Glee-bells are ringing:
Adieu, my companion, my thread's nearly spun!

"One wild Christmas Eve, crouching low in a corner,
I found thee, dumb Comrade, 'mid hunger and cold;
And, oh, do thou save me in death from the scorner,
For thine is a friendship unpurchased by *gold!*"

In vain with the Ice-King of Winter he wrestled—
He drew his plaid round him, robe-like, ere his fall—
His dog, like a sentinel, close to him nestled,
Half-hid by his garment, which lay like a pall.

God pity the Pilgrim! for cold was the billow,
And cold was the blast as it blew from the cloud;
But colder than all was the snow-drift, his pillow—
The fingers of Frost weaving weirdly his shroud.

Next morn a gay company rode from the Castle,
Among them a Bride newly married in state,
Attended by many a noble and vassal,
And kind was her heart as her station was great.

The half-famished hound in her pathway leapt whining,
And sprang to the spot where his dead master lay;
The dumb creature's meaning her lord then divining,
The Pilgrim was tenderly carried away.

As on a soft touch by the Yule-log they laid him,
Slid out of his bosom her likeness so fair;
With sudden surprise the rich lady surveyed him,
And knew 'twas her Father who lifeless lay there.

With anguish and pity she watched till the morrow—
The links never break that bind parent and child;
His pale face she bathed in the showers of her sorrow,
And smoothed his gray locks that were frozen and wild.

Within the Old Church 'mong the hills he was buried—
A white tablet tells where he resteth at last;
His dog for him mourned as his coffin they carried,
And round the proud Castle roared hoarsely the blast.

FAITH, HOPE, AND CHARITY.

There are Three Angels strewing earth with flowers
At happy Christmas time,
While merry Bells are pealing from the towers
Their musical soft chime.
Bells, Christmas Bells, their hallowed strain attend!
Faith, Hope, and Charity on earth descend!

He is not far from Heaven whose soul's the shrine
Of Faith, and Hope, and Love;
And he who dies to self gains life divine,
And wears a crown above.
Each heart may be the manger of the birth
Of these celestial Messengers to earth.

Faith, Hope, and Charity, to all are near,
And to worn eyelids start
The Penitent's first feeble prayer,—a tear,—
A jewel from the heart:
And those whose feet with Life's rough march are sore,
And those who strove and failed, they bless the more.

The lowly cottage, and the palace dome,
Wherever Suffering lies,
Whatever bears the blessed name of Home,
They gladden with their eyes:
And stronger grow the weak and spirit-blind
Whom clasping in their arms they closer bind.

"Good will to man,—Good will that ne'er shall cease,"
Is their angelic song.
They fly, bright heralds of the Prince of Peace,
So beautiful and strong,
To drop sweet balm in sorrow-stricken souls,
While Bells, dear Christmas Bells, your music rolls.

And glory in the highest be to Him,
The God of glory shorn,
Within each human heart with sorrow dim
May He again be born!
And that shall be indeed a holy fane
Where Faith, and Hope, and Charity shall reign.

The tender radiance of yon beacon-star
Shall mirror to the gaze
Of our dear friends who dwell in lands afar
The English fireside-blaze;
And floating in its beams they shall behold
The Triune Angels, with their feet of gold.

Age shall forget its sorrows in a dream
Of heavenly hope and bliss:
Youth shall be gay with laughter as a stream
Beneath the sunbeam's kiss:
The Rich aside the plumes of pomp shall fling,
The Poor Man be as happy as the King.

Faith is an amaranth of Eden-birth,
Where breakers never roll:
Hope is a Star which shines from heaven to earth,
The beacon of the soul:
And Charity is the golden Sun, whose power
Doth warm the lowly weed and stately *flower.*

Oh! welcome these Three Angels! Think, ah, think!
What promises are lost!
How many a poor but noble soul may sink
Through hopes for ever crushed!
Hail! Mercy's Shepherd! and His halcyon reign:
Bells, Christmas Bells, break out in song again.

THE DUMB BOY AND THE ROBIN.

WHAT strange events oft come to pass,
We know not how or whence,
So dim appears the smoky glass
Of human sense;
God's ways transcendently surpass
Man's in magnificence.

Poor was the Widow's earthly lot;
She had an only Boy:
The gladsome spirit of her cot,
Her life's sole joy;
Her love for him no change could blot,
No accident destroy.

Down-gazing on her Infant's face
That merry Christmas morn,
She marvelled at his wondrous grace,
Though so forlorn;
And gave to Him alone the praise
Within a manger born.

While in his cradle soft he slept,
A little Robin came,
Above the sleeping Babe it stept
With breast of flame;
No note it sang while there it kept,
And flew away the same.

Another Christmas morn, and lo!
The same wee Robin sped
Across the wastes of frost and snow;
Beside the bed
It silently hopt to and fro,
And silently it fled;

And while bright visions wrote a scroll
With sunbeams out of reach,
Slowly as windborne billows roll
Upon the beach
The truth burst on the Mother's soul,
Her Child was reft of speech.

And sure as Christmas came the Bird
Into the chamber hopt,
As if some sorrow all unheard
Its song had stopt;
And Child and Bird might well have stirred
The tear by Pity dropt.

Yet in his soul were starry gleams
Of beauty, truth, and love,
Depicturings of angel-beams
From worlds above,
By whose far-flowing crystal streams
His snowy feet would rove.

He loved his Mother, and was brave,
Fired with an earnest faith,
With flowers he decked his Father's grave
Of sweetest breath ;
And would have gone a mile to save
A butterfly from death.

The Boy fell sick ; the Summer sped,
Neglected were his flowers ;
Their bright leaves were like rainbows shed
In twinkling showers,
Or melting, dreamily they fled,
Sweet spirits of the bowers.

Another Christmas morn was there—
Another world was won—
For that poor Mother clasped in prayer
Her dying Son :
Resigned, she kissed his forehead fair,
And said, "Thy will be done!"

Then suddenly the Robin prest
The window-flowers aside,
And 'lighting on the dead Boy's breast,
Poured forth a tide
Of joyous music o'er his rest,
And, looking skyward, died.

The Widow knew her woe ere long
Would all be overpast ;
That Heaven, with all its shining throng,
Reigned o'er the blast,
And that her Child had burst in song
'Mong angel-choirs at last!

THE GOLDEN SKELETON.

"ONCE more 'tis Christmas-day. Hark, the Bells ring loud with glee!
Mother, snow is falling, wheel your arm-chair near the fire.
Little darling Lilian, come and sit beside my knee,
And sing that hallowed song which was chaunted by the choir.
Give Grandmamma and me, dear, your sweetest Christmas kiss,
And put away your story-books and pretty toys with care.
Remember whom to-day from our ingle-nook we miss,
And let us think kind thoughts of him, and mention him in prayer.

"I dreamt last night I saw him in the shadow by my bed,
But, ah! I turned my gaze from his wild, reproachful eyes,
Whence every gleam of hope—the light of Life—had fled,
And from the glimmering glamour a Spectre seemed to rise—
A Voice came down from heaven, which sounded like a knell,
And through my wondering Spirit a thrill of terror sent.
One word alone he whispered, echoed by the wind, 'Farewell.'
Then, silent as a gliding Ghost, into the night he went.

"When passion's gust was over, my love for him grew cold.
I was rich, and he was poor! Day by day I saw him sink.
Desolation's torrent o'er his humble dwelling rolled,
And broke the fragile chain of affection link by link.
With Nature's banquet round him he cared for nought of ours.
The pangs he suffered might have made an angel's heartstrings start,
And still his kingly soul cherished love of stars and flowers.
You closed your door against him—I shut him from my heart.

"You are so like him, Lilian! Oh, is that pity's dew?
Nay, Child, weep not for him—a wretched wanderer still.
When you nestled in his bosom his love was deep and true,
And he carried you long miles when the wintry nights were chill.
The best wine in his cup, the best viands on his plate,
He would always give to you, not quite to goodness blind ;
But misfortune hurled him headlong down the rapids to his fate,
And only broken fragments of his life are left behind."

"But, Mamma, you have taught me that forgiveness is a grace—
Oh, forgive him for my sake before the break of morn.
I, too, have dreamt of him, and his tears fell on my face,
And then his pale lips quivered like snow-flakes on a thorn."
"Kneel down, clasp hands, my Darling, and pray to God above
To grant His grace to guide us—our lives with joy to crown.
He is the only fountain of mercy and of love,
And now, my cherub, sleep, for the darkness droppeth down."

"Mother, the Postman knocks! A letter! And from whom?
Birdie slumbers in her nest, and hears not the alarm :
Oh, my heart is sore oppressed with a heavy weight of gloom.
Take the wreath from off my brow—the bracelet from my arm."
"Your Nameless Friend died yesterday," thus the letter read,
"With a portrait in his hand, and a lock of amber hair.
"Tell them I forgive them," were the last words that he said,
"Be theirs a merry Christmas, and a New Year bright and fair."

JOY-BELLS.

RING, ring, merry Bells, from a thousand towers,
Break, break, happy Chimes, into music sweet;
But ye cannot bring back Earth's faded flowers,
Nor moments, alas! that were fair but fleet.
Oh, why should we sigh for the pleasures flown,
When strength is in Suffering's cradle born?
And whoever would wear an earthly crown
Must feel the point of the venomed thorn.

Ye speak to my Soul, like a Voice from above,
Of a time when unkindness from earth shall depart,
And Selfishness wane in the glory of Love,
Whose temple is built in the merciful heart,
When Virtue shall pilot the spirit of Youth,
And Peace softly brood like a dove in its nest,
When all shall adore in one Palace of Truth,
And brotherly sympathy stir in each breast.

Ye tell me in tones like the Angels of Heaven,
That earth is an Eden for pleasure designed,
That sweetest enchantment to Virtue is given,
And Joy ever crowns the beneficent mind.
And, oh, what a garden, delightful and fair,
This Old World would be by forgiveness and love,
With goodness and beauty emparadised there,
Watched o'er by the eye of our Father above.

Ye sing, merry Bells, of a future of bliss,
A new golden age dawning up from the deep,
When cheeks that are pallid shall blush with love's kiss,
And hearts that are heavy with ecstasy leap,
And sweet as the music of Home's blessed shrine,
Where loving hearts dwell in affection serene,
Shall rise the glad notes of thanksgivings divine,
And prayer that brings peace where repentance hath been.

FROST PICTURES ON THE WINDOW PANE.

IT was in the bleak December, as I watched each blazing ember,
And fresh from Nature's loom gleamed the garment of the snow;
And the Christmas Bells were ringing—to the World glad tidings bringing,
Of the Child-Messiah cradled in a manger long ago.

While bitter winds were sighing, I saw an Angel flying,
Fairer, purer than the snow, fluttering downward like a pall;
It was Charity, in pity sent to village, town, *and city,*
To heal the broken-hearted and speak words *of love to all.*

Quick she sped across the alleys to the wild snow-covered valleys,
Where sat an aged Mother by the bright trim English fire.
Attired was she in sable, and the Book was on the table,
Which she ceased to read to listen to the Christmas minstrel-choir;

Anear her sate a Maiden, her eyes with tear-drops laden,
Their thoughts were of a new-made grave and of a sailor-boy;
And the Angel entered slowly, with a footstep soft and holy,
And they felt life still had left for them a cup of real joy.

Straightway again she wandered, by a Cottage hearth she pondered,
Where feeble unto death lay a little suffering Child;
And its Father and its Mother, clinging closer to each other,
In the majesty of sorrow and despair were weeping wild.

As the latch she lifted lightly the fireside beamed more brightly,
And from their shrouded spirits the stone of sorrow rolled;
And they saw above their pining the Star of Bethlehem shining,
And knew their lamb was gathered in the tender Shepherd's fold.

Oh, may this lovely Angel be the World's divine Evangel,
And gather in the Poor around the Christmas board;
Clothe the naked ones who shiver, sing hosannas to the giver,
And with mistletoe and holly wreathe the cannon and the sword.

BELL RINGERS ON NEW YEAR'S EVE.

'TWAS New Year's Eve, that merry time,
When all the Bells awake to sing,
In music merrier than my rhyme,
The burial chaunt of the Old Year King.
"Bear him along in his silver shell,
With moonbeams pale enshroud him well,
While Heralds his triumph-beadroll tell,
With many a knell and musical swell."
Lustily, gustily, sang each Bell,
Till the hoary pile
Began to smile
In a happy dream of yesterday,
When they rang a Wedding roundelay.

With might and main, till midnight waned,
Eight figures stood on the belfry floor,
And silent as ghosts in the darkness strained
Till the old tower rocked with the thund'rous roar.

For the Old Year Monarch lay cold and dead,
Rain-drops and red leaves on his bier were shed:
And the Moon, with her starry squadrons, led
The funeral march to his icy bed,
And the Winds his funeral service said,
And a clash of delight
Startled the night,
For the Bells pealed forth their loudest chime,
And oh! but a ringer old is Time.

The Old King died—a prince was born,
The New Year mounted to his throne:
He donned his crown with a joyous scorn,
And the old Bells rang a merrier tone.
"The Old King lies on his snowy bier,
His sceptre no longer the world shall fear:
And who o'er his grave will shed a tear?
For kings are costly, though seldom dear;
And we may behold one every year,
Every year, and every day,
Clad in purple and gold so gay.
So now farewell, Old King of Time:
All hail the young Prince with loudest chime."

GOOD-NIGHT TO THE OLD YEAR!

GOOD-NIGHT, Old Year, Good-night!
Thou camest with thy locks of bloom,
And step flower-light and free;
With smiles our firesides to illume,
And song and revelry.
That breeze-like step in vain we seek,
The wild rose-leaf hath left thy cheek,
Thine eyes have lost their light,
Thy locks in threads of silver break:
Good-night, Old Year, Good-Night!

Good-night, Old Year, Good-night!
Oh, thou art blind as well as old,
And deaf the while we sing—
Couldst thou but hear our mirth outrolled,
While roof and rafter ring!
Out by the gateway of the dawn,
We'll lead thy faltering footsteps on,
Along a path rose-bright;
And we will weep when thou art gone:
Good-night, Old Year, Good-night!

Good-night, Old Year, Good-night!
What if no more thine affluence fills
The trees with juicy fruit,
No vintage reeleth down the hills,
No corn-fields sunward shoot!
When thou art old, and deaf, and blind,
And shivering in the wailing wind,
With visage thin and white,
Shall we forget when thou wert kind?
Good-night, Old Year, Good-night!

Good-night, Old year, Good-night!
Come, gather round the Yule-log fire,
And count old memories o'er;
Of song and story never tire,
Be this night as of yore.
Thy brows shall wear a coronal
Of ivy, green and beautiful;
We crown thee with delight,
And drink to thee with glasses full:
Good night, Old Year, Good-night!

Good-night, Old Year, Good-night!
On thee descends the dew of sleep,
And shineth the cold moon;
In heaven the stars have 'gun to peep,
Thou wilt be with them soon.
Oh, when my life sinks to repose,
All softly as a folding rose
Lapped in a dream of light,
May hearts as fondly watch its close;
Good-night, Old Year, Good-night!

FATHER'S RETURN HOME.

'TIS Christmas morn! hark to the chimes, my gentle Mother dear,
A lonely Christmas still is ours, and wintry days are near;
The feathery flakes of snow fall fast, and fringe the fields and fells,
Like Angels' footsteps soft and slow, to peals of holy Bells;
The Church is girded round by trees, in silver armour clad,
And from its hood of snow peeps out like some fair Bride so glad.

Oh, Mother, draw your cushioned chair beside the ingle-nook,
And, while the Children are at church, read from the blessed Book;
Then like the dear old times 'twill seem, when one we miss was here.
But where kind Heaven bestows a smile 'tis wrong to give a tear!
Bring forth his picture and his chair; Oh, happy bygone hours!
The Past's dead roses sweeter are than all our living flowers!

Six years ago—it seems an age—the one we loved the best
On sunny seas sailed forth to seek his fortune in the West;
He promised he would soon return to England's seagirt isle,
Or send for us, whatever fate on him should frown or smile;
Yet not a word from him we 've heard since that distressful day,
When through a mist of tears I watched the huge Ship sail away.

And oh! when I have heard the storms through midnights long and dark,
I feared the yawning waves had swept above his foundered bark;
And I have prayed the God of love to calm the raging blast,
And bring my Husband safely home to these fond arms at last:

If not entombed beneath the waves of the Atlantic main,
Perchance he joined the Northern hosts, and fell among the slain.

"God bless my Father!" prays each Child at nightfall by the bed;
What will he think when he comes back and finds that Tommy 's dead?
I see the snow-wreathed mound from here, the Robin sings beside;
He called for "Daddy" to come near the very night he died.
I should so like a tiny cross his simple name to tell,
Inscribed with that sweet verse he sang, to show we loved him well.

You 're smiling, Mother, through your tears—of Tommy you were proud;
Your face shines like the silver moon behind a snowy cloud.
You have been good and kind to me, and when my love returns,
Joy whispers in my longing heart, he 'll kiss us both by turns.
My love for him is stronger now than on the day we wed;
O God! that on his loving breast was laid my aching head!

Ah! look! the Children come from Church. Oh, what a lovely train!
I think my darlings look as well as any in the lane.
How tall and fair dear Rachel grows! and pretty Ruth looks sweet!
And rosy Richard as the fawn is nimble on his feet!
Whatever would their Father say if he could see them now!
For I have toiled both night and day and kept my plighted vow.
But who is this with bearded face just coming round the hill?
I cannot see his features yet, but how my pulses thrill!
He 's asking Rachel questions now, she points towards our cot;
He 's taken Richard by the hand, and Ruth is not forgot.
I wonder, Mother, what it means? he 's coming to the door.
There 's something in his face and walk I know I 've seen before.
'Tis he! 'tis he! my Husband dear! O God! I am too blest!
O, let me go away to weep, or hide me in your breast;
Take, take your Darlings round your knee, and clasp them to your heart,
And tell me by and by of toils since we have been apart.
Our heavenly Father should be first our heart-felt thanks to claim,
Then let us all kneel down in prayer, and *bless His holy* name.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS.

CHRISTMAS greetings! Christmas greetings!
Hark! the merry Bells are ringing!
Happy be the true heart's beatings,
While an angel's voice is singing!
This is the Saviour's natal morn,
And robes of white the earth adorn!

Christmas greetings! Christmas greetings!
Flow the song in sacred measure;
Through the desert as we travel,
This shall be our well of pleasure;
The Sabbath of the Year—the time
For holy thoughts and hymns sublime!

Christmas greetings! Christmas greetings!
Though the wintry skies are glooming;
In our homes and hearts the summer
With its roses may be blooming;
Flowerets of celestial birth
Are Love and Friendship, Truth and Mirth.

Christmas greetings! Christmas greetings!
In our souls a moral summer—
Kindly thoughts and acts—may linger,
Crowning with delight each comer;
And hearts may thrill to cheerful words
With music, like a grove of birds.

Christmas greetings! Christmas greetings!
Why should any tone of sadness
Chill the warmth of Friendship's meetings
While the heavens are full of gladness?
Play the music, and chaunt the song,
Ye olden Bells, your strains prolong!

Christmas greetings! Christmas greetings!
Horny be the hand or tender,
Hearts may have the noblest beatings,
And to Truth a reverence render;
Rich and poor, and bond and free,
Come, swell the Christmas jubilee!

Christmas greetings! Christmas greetings!
Than the evergreen and holly
Brighter far is Hope, the seraph,
Wreathing laurels while we're jolly;
Christmas Yule-logs, bid depart
Grief's drifted snows, which chill the heart.

Christmas greetings! Christmas greetings!
Soon the old Year will be sinking,
Like a wrecked ship on the ocean,
And no time be left for thinking;
And with it, too, will disappear,
Ah! many a face to memory dear!

Christmas greetings! Christmas greetings!
Smiling wife and children singing,
Wreathe we now Joy's flowery garland,
While the Christmas Bells are ringing.
So musical and sweet their chime,
The Bells within our hearts keep time!

TO THE ROBIN ON MY WINDOW-SILL.

BLEW the nipping blasts of Winter,
Snow folded vale and hill,
When a gay and sprightly Robin
Hopped on my window-sill.
All the minstrels of the Summer
Away had vanished long;
But this homely Birdie lingered,
And sang his cheerful song.

Every forest-bough was laden
With fairy flakes of snow,
Children's faces glowed like comets,
And streams had ceased to flow.
Decked with wreaths of sparkling jewels,
Flashed leaflets, trees, and plains;
And King Frost, with icy pencil,
Drew pictures on the panes.

Not a rose bloomed on the hedges,
The gardens all were wild;
And there grew in meadows twenty
No daisy for a child;
But the little Robin Redbreast
Still sang with all his heart,
Like a strong and thankful spirit
When earthly hopes depart.

Oft he carols on a boulder,
Where waters gush along,
Or he perches on an alder,
O'er graves to sing a song.
Most he loves the barn-roofs mossy,
With all their garnered store,
And to pick the crumbs we fling him
Before the Cottage-door.

He seemed to bring me tidings
Of friends across the wave,
And of some with angels numbered,
So gentle, fair, and brave;
And I blessed the friendly Minstrel,
With soft regretful sighs,
While Memory's desert blossomed
With flowers of Paradise.

Then methought of Spring he chaunted
Beside my window-bower,
Of the sunbursts soon to shimmer
On twinkling leaf and flower:
Of the primrose, sweet-brier, crocus,
And hawthorn's coral bloom,
And of heartsease for my sorrow,
Of gladness for my gloom.

And he poured unto that Being
His grateful notes of praise,
Whose kind bounty food had scattered
On winter's barren ways;
And though lowly was my roof-tree,
And scanty was my bread,
Little dainty crumbs of comfort
Along the sill I spread.

Oh! that I like thee could warble
'Mid seasons bleak and hoar,
And though humble, still be thankful,
The Poet of the poor.

All the gaudy songsters soaring
Their grander lays might trill,
For an Angel's song thou singest,
Perched on my window-sill.

A CHRISTMAS FANCY.

'TWAS on the eve of Christmas Day,
As I sat musing by the fire,
Thinking of times gone by for aye,
While sweetly sang the minstrel-choir:
"Blest sacrament of all the year!"
I said, "for love and joy designed,
Far from my thoughts be sorrow's tear,
To dim the mirror of my mind.
Ring, merry Christmas bells!
Sing, waits, sing!
Of joy your music tells—
Christ is King!"

Grandsire sat smoking in the chair;
Beside him stood a welcome guest—
A Maiden bashful, young, and fair,
The darling image of my breast!
The Children played, then sang a hymn;
The lighted Christmas-tree was gay!
But Aunt Maria looked so prim,
Her very curls would fear to stray.

The roof and chandeliers o'erhead
The mistletoe and holly crowned
With berries threaded, white and red,
Like gems a Maiden's neck around.
I wondered, as I marked their grace,
How came these jewels on the tree;
And Fancy's finger 'gan to trace
A vision wrought of love and glee.

Methought as Father Christmas lay
Asleep beneath the forest's shade,
He dreamed an Angel passed that way,
And some undying boon he prayed.
A wreath around his head she bound
Of mistletoe and holly green,
Then kissed his lips with silver sound,
And lo! the berries first were seen.

In accent kind the Angel said,
"Oh! when the wintry days are drear,
Go forth and bless some hoary head,
Heal aching hearts, dry sorrow's tear,
Give succour to the helpless poor,
Make cheerful some dim, fireless hearth,
Increase the wretched Widow's store,
And light the Orphan's cheek with mirth."

She said, "For every deed and prayer
Of mercy berries bright shall grow
As richest pearls and rubies rare
On holly tree and mistletoe;
With kisses sweet of Lovers true
The lips shall thrill, the heart shall leap."
The Angel then to Heaven upflew,
And Father Christmas woke from sleep.
Ring, merry Christmas bells!
Sing, waits, sing!
Of Heaven your music tells—
Christ is King!

SONG OF THE FACTORY BELL.

'TWAS the break of the Morn, yet darker than night,
I saw at a lone Cottage-window a light:
A glamour it threw o'er the feathery Snow,
Whose shroud-weaving shuttle we very well know;
And sullen and sad as a funeral knell,
I heard the loud sound of the Factory Bell.

Louder and louder that harsh-grating tongue
Roared out its summons to old and to young,—
To women and children, tired out with their toil,
While Mammon exulted in counting his spoil.
Though England hath plenty to wear and to sell,
Rings early and late the loud Factory Bell.

"Wake, wake, little Jerry! 'tis half-past-four.
Come, Darling, arise, there's a knock at the door.
So oft as I've called you, you're sleeping again.
Come, Jerry, arise! long enough you have lain.
The lamps in the street are put out, I can tell.
Hark! hark! there's the sound of the Factory Bell."

"Oh Mother!" said Jerry, "how brief is the joy
Of a poor little hard-working Factory Boy!
The Sailor who rides on the Ocean is free,
And better off, Mother, methinks, than me.
He swings in his hammock, the wild billows swell;
But he hears not the sound of the Factory Bell!"

"Wake, wake, little Kitty! your loom will be still.
Come, Darling, arise, there's the Snow falling chill.
How little it is, well you know, that we earn,
And if we are late, why, we home must return.
Do I not go with you, though often unwell?
Hark! hark! 'tis the sound of the Factory Bell."

"Oh, Mother!" said Kitty, "when slumber is sweet
I have to arise, and run into the street.
The Seamstress can sleep till the milk-boys sing;
But 'Come along, Kitty!' the Bell-voices ring.
'Come along, Jerry!' while winter-winds swell.
'Come, Mother, march on!' says the Factory Bell."

"Well, Darlings," said she; "it is hard, I declare;
But people, you know, must have clothing to wear:
For Weavers and Spinners the wheels must go round,
And fingers to work them must somewhere be found.
Short hours and long wages, methinks, would be well,
Then Music would ring in the Factory Bell."

HOLIDAY OF THE FACTORY OPERATIVES.

A LYRIC OF MANCHESTER LIFE.

OH! the Earth rolls on so merrily and gaily,
That for music now we cannot hear the wail
That moves the heart of God in Town and City daily,
Of lives like lilies trampled down in Misery's vale.
Pleasure's dance whirls onward, bewildering and blinding,
Reeling round the death-bed of immortal souls;
Dainty words of lavender we evermore are finding,
While a World to ruin down the Rapids rolls.

In perilous paths we cheer our gallant Queen-land,
  Shout to see the Gallows with its living fruitage grow,
And wreathe with velvet fingers Fancy's flowery green tan l,
  Like a crown of glory round the Devil's brow.

The wheel of Life revolves in darkness, resting never,
  And day by day it doth God's world in sorrow hurl;
It rolls its massive weight o'er crushed millions for ever;
  Thousands are struck deathwards in its giddy whirl.
Want still pointeth westward with its skeleton finger,
  And huskily it asketh why to Mammon we crouch down—
Why, with dumb, pallid lips, at Gain's sucked wells we linger,
  While Wealth's graperies sun beside the hungering Town.
Luxury gaily jesteth o'er its sparkling sherry,
  While we toil, toil, toil, till fevered life be o'er;
And the flowers bloom as sweetly, and the spring-birds are as merry
  And cheerily the sunshine falls, as heretofore.

It is the Children's Holiday, and glorious is the Morning;
  With hearts lit up with joy we leave the fetid Town
For the green and wrinkled hills which the heather is adorning
  The leafy village lanes, and gorsy moorlands brown.
A bloom of splendour glows o'er enamelled wildernesses,
  Cloud-barks are afloat upon the sunny tide,
The bashful primrose shrinketh in its glossy tresses,
  And the violet's purply leaves with dew are glorified.
Oh, we were crowded Captives in the City dusky,
  Within its life-thick walls were our spirits sin-defiled,
But sing heigho! for the forest-tabernacles musky,
  The free breeze, birds, and field-flowers, greenery-inisled.

Beneath the gorgeous heavens the universe is blooming,
  Hither to God's garden, oh! Labour's swarthy swarms,
Where down in the deep glens the waterfalls are booming,
  And woodlands wait to clasp you in their tender arms.
Up to your wounded breasts the lovely flowers will nestle,
  Winds cool your burning sighs, rills mingle with your tears;
Angels with your wrongs and sufferings will wrestle,
  Till on your brows the crown of strength and joy appears.
Come lay your cold sad hearts on Nature's glowing bosom,
  Where meadows seem to melt away in blushing flowers,
And dew-drops sparkling hang on each leaf, and shrub, and blossom,
  As if ten thousand suns had fallen in the bowers.

Now give the Train his bridle—impatient he is snorting,
  There's flame-breath in his nostrils, his eyeballs glow like fire;
His long and flowing mane in spiral folds is sporting:
  Does he scent the green hills that shall lift us heaven nigher?
Like a steam-breathing Eagle, he is fleet and fearless;
  The landscape's verdure hangings are calcined by his tread;
Sweltering through gloom and glory like a Demon cheerless,
  Thunder-shod and lightning-winged with his crested head.
Like Heroes with charmed lives we speed in more than mortal
  Chariots of fire, made by the Genii grand;
Oh! do we glide along to Lethe's poppied portal,
  Or some enchanted palace built in fairy land?

The Counter, Mill, and Ledger we have left behind us,
  To read the precious Poems on God's sunbeam-written page,
For Mammon with his golden dust can never blind us
  To the beauty of the flowers outside his iron cage.
We will forget of men the virulence and verbiage,
  Where like little children leaves patter unto leaves;
Muse beneath the foliage, ankle-deep in herbage,
  Singing harvest-home o'er Thought's gathered golden sheaves:
Kiss the lips of streamlets in their pearly beaming,
  While our hearts of care their melodies beguile;
Meet God in his walks through Earth's Eden gleaming,
  In the Summer-festival take Love's hand a-smile.

We'll dig our souls for gold to-day, nor heed to-morrow ;
God shall make His image in our bosoms more divine ;
Down the ravine of the Past we'll fling our pale, dead sorrow,
Draw gem-like depicturings out of Memory's mine.
The birds with tender trembles in the bush are singing,
To their song-pulsations the green leaves dance in light;
The young lambs and the deer roam where softest grass is springing
Youthful bands are trooping in freedom and delight.
We will bridge with rainbows agony's tear-surges,
Scatter summer-flowers o'er our buried wrong,
While out of Night's abyss Nature, like the sun, emerges
In a flood of glory, beautiful and strong.

We may not drink of Art's delicious founts of splendour
Music, statues, paintings, works of genius divine,
Were only wrought for Luxury's votaries so tender,
Dainty fingers, lily-faces, puppets in apparel fine.
Yet have we human sensibilities and feelings,
A taste for beauty, harmony, and lovely shapes of grace,
An admiration warm of the glorious God-revealings
Of Angelo and Claude, and their illustrious race.
But we can gaze on God's sun-draped stone-sculpture glowing
In the mountains ; hear His music in the grove ;
Behold His paintings in the landscapes overflowing
With richest hues of glory, and the light of love.

Nature, like the Genii, gilds her emerald palace ;
The beaver builds his hut, the honey-bee his cell ;
And we drink the heaven-wine from every pencilled chalice
Of her fruity vintage in the daffodilly dell.
We listen to the foam-bells on the billows chiming,
Our souls a mingled music of joyancy and pride,
And the silken-leafed blossoms are to one another rhyming,
Each diamonded with dew-drops like a jewelled bride.
We seem to hear the angel-anthems from the good-land,
While Dawn's broad portals to the Skylarks back are thrown,
And breathe delicious gales of fragrance from the bud-land,
In melody and sunshine o'er the meadows strown.

Oh God, that each pale face could press a blossom-pillow,
Restoring youth's lost bloom to pallid cheek and brow;
From pastoral hillocks gaze upon the gilded billow,
Paven with starry sparkles from the vessel's prow !
The palpitating hearts of the stifling City
Hear not the welcome-songs of birds in plumage gay ;
They never see a daisy but it weepeth tears of pity,
Responsive to their own, they have been so long away.
A grander gush of Song shall voice their silent sadness ;
Fortitude heroical, 'mid want and misery ;
The People yet shall rise to pluck the fruit of gladness
Growing ruddy-ripe on the branches of Life's tree.

We talk with God once more—in His green world we linger;
The paradisal air seems like a pleasant tune ;
An inner chord of music vibrates to the finger
Of Memory that plies adown the Past's lagoon.
I think of the world's spring when Truth brought never sorrow,
Nor iris-hearted Faith wept o'er Love's broken dream ;
When cheeks were blanched to glow with rosier smiles to-morrow,
And Famine's lips ne'er scorched beside Life's flowing stream ;
When no purple robed exploded follies heinous,
Under the new thrones no old agonies shook hands ;
When Wealth's gate was free to Toil, and Alfred's genius
With benignant beauty ruled o'er all the lands.

And oh ! this leaping England still doth flourish grandly,
Waving forest-flags, pricked with golden filigree ;
Her scarrèd face still smileth beautifully, blandly,
With her coif of azure and green cymar of the sea.

In Spring her rutted lanes are sprinkled with primroses,
  Worshipping God like hermits in leaf-cloisters dim ;
By lakes, like living sapphire, the violet reposes ;
  In a sea of verdure her sunny landscapes swim ;
The bees are out a-honeying in her gardens flowery ;
  Carolling so blithesomely like a human soul,
The Lark sings golden vespers on its skyway towery,
  Robed in the morning's splendour, like a saintly stole.

Sylvan slips of beauty peer out in the byways,
  Winds are winged with kisses from the lips of flowers,
Leaves to linnet-music dance along the highways,
  And Flora dreams of Eden in her Paphian bowers.
Her warm and golden mouth in dewy beauty buddeth,
  The rose swoons on her cheeks the violet steeps her eyes ;
We may kiss her, while her couch the sunny lava floodeth,
  Never will our kisses take her with surprise.
Oh ! why did God make earth so glorious and joyous,
  Dropping His love-amulets, the flowers, on the soil,
While liberty to love her beauty they deny us,
  Whose avarice is fed by our crushing over-toil ?

Then, like a soothing angel, Memory recalleth
  To the sorrowing heart its lost Elysian dreams ;
The kissing dew of eve that in holy beauty falleth,
  The bleating of the lambs, the idyl of the streams ;
The songs of happy birds that o'er the landscape hover,
  Unlock the golden wealth of youth's visions, soul-enshrined,
And we hear distilled a music sweet as whispers of a lover,
  Of voices gone for aye, like a harp's tones on the wind.
O'er rugged paths Life's rill may glide with shade-devices,
  But there 's pearlier freshness welling at its spring ;
Dreams perfume our struggles, as ships filled with spices,
  Wrecked 'mong the rocks, with fragrance load the tempest's wing.

The sly old rooks from vernal elm-tops chatter
  Around the crumbling pile, wrapt in its sacred trance ;
Songs, like twinkling raindrops, 'mong the branches patter,
  Birds in leaves are fondled in a swinging dalliance.
The air is finely winnowed by the flash of winglets
  O'er the tall moss-mantled towers of the Ruin grey ;
From its bald brow are hanging weeds and ivy-ringlets,
  And every porch is roofed with honeysuckles gay.
Oh, once-a-year to list the voices of the People,
  Up the welkin swelling in one mighty prayer !
Some linger in the meadows, others climb the steeple ;
  Over all the grounds are pale-faces everywhere.

Now Twilight's round horizon swims in purply glory,
  Primrosy peaks are swathèd in a balmy fold,
The Skylark is descending to tell its angel-story
  To the daisy's peaceful heart of powdery velvet gold ;
The sunset-spangled lake lapsed in the valley lieth,
  Like a moss-cradled infant on the breasted hill ;
The ripples murmur music as the soft wind sigheth,
  Breaking into flame-smiles o'er their foamy frill ;
Vapours low are hanging o'er mountain, vale, and river ;
  The heavens are a-fire ! 'tis sublime to watch the change !
On glory-burnished wheels, in narrowing circles ever,
  O'er the fields of space the dusk cloud-chariots range.

Like flakes of blackness on a bright prismatic pinion,
  The darkness droppeth down upon the ebbing light ;
The Night is dusky grand, like an Ethiop's dominion,
  And the birds sing to their young a faint and last "good night."
Each thing that hath a home unto its shelter goeth,
  Listening to God, lake, hill, and mountain stand,
Heaven in the golden kiss of the Sunset gloweth,
  The Moon her white beams poureth saintly still and grand.

But oh! what homes have we? The mariner-swallow
  Can speed on lightning-wings to dwell 'mid other blooms
But we are fettered down in caves and charnels hollow—
  As if Earth wanted room—where Summer never comes.

Ah! the Holiday is over! the City glooms before us,
  Like a breaker where our hearts are smitten into dust;
A canopy of bronze shuts the lid of heaven o'er us,
  The living tide is surging with the wrecks of life and lust.
Ah! the Holiday is over! Toil seeth in his dreaming
  The fields, flowers, forest-trees, birds, sea, and castled strand,
While the lance-like rays of a million lamps are streaming
  Adown the streets, like lights in a Cathedral grand.
Alas! within those walls how many hearts are throbbing,
  With weary grief and hunger gnawing at their core!
While the great City in my heart and brain is sobbing,
  Like a surge of sorrow, sighing, sobbing evermore.

Labour's shuttles, looms, and anvils now are quiet,
  Pale women and lean children dream of curses loud,
While Luxury dreams of argosies and scenes of revel-riot,
  And music overflows the mansions of the proud.
Out of the suburbs steals an odour of the meadows,
  Vagrantly through streets and squares, and choking fumes;
And over the tall chimneys gleam the lurid shadows,
  Like the frown of God on a theatre of tombs.
Few there be who think of the thousands broken-hearted;
  Of those who in the darkness sing of bright hopes gone,
Whose tears are fossil-gems of happiness departed,
  Who die in sweeter music like the fabled swan.

True, we sometimes may stoop to drink from poisoned fountains,
  Leaving in cloudy gulfs our embryo-worlds awhile;
We have but one dear Friend to look to o'er the mountains,
  And it seems ages to us since we felt His smile.
To crouch in homes like ours is but a stinging pleasure,
  Our little Nestlings all with mouths a-gape for food:
Misfortune drives us out on the sluggish stream of leisure,
  In some glittered Gin-haunt to drown the crying brood.
Wealth, with cold glance our little sunshine blighting,
  Looks down from its proud plinth upon our lowly throng.
Behold upon the wall the mystical fire-writing!
  Ye laugh upon the Rapids of our woe and wrong!

In wretchedness and want, one of our homeless brothers
  Wept o'er a tender Child in its hedge-nest lying dead;
And she who was the fondest, kindliest of Mothers,
  Upon her icy bosom pillowed its fair head.
And there the little weakling frozen germ lay blighted,
  Like a lost lamb upon the silent hills of snow;
Its faded saintly face, that once was ruby-lighted,
  Looked like a wintry flower that long had ceased to grow.
Oh, give God thanks! for on Wealth's splendid treadmill,
  'Mid whirling wheels and drums, it will not toil long hours:
A calm unbroken sleep doth now its heart and head fill,
  And Infancy unangeled may kiss its kindred flowers.

A crowing cradled Babe in yonder marble mansion,
  As in a dovelet's nest, at the same moment lay,
And rounded like a pearl was its fair brow's expansion,
  A rosy panting princeling, clad in raiment gay.
It sipped the dew of life that gushed forth rich and milky,
  As a golden humming-bird sucks the best fruit's honey-juice!
And bending smiling o'er its sunny lips and silky,
  A Mother's jewelled ringlets showered down long and loose.
Oh! in luxurious loveliness this budding Babe was lying,
  While that wretched Mother's infant died a withered thing;
Yet, to her heart, her Child, in singing or in sighing,
  Did the same love, and joy, and mother-anguish bring.

Oh, in our midst, sweet Woman, Life's divine evangel,
  Toil and sorrow bears that would break a seraph's wing,
She stands at Eden's gate like a meek suffering angel,
  Back unto its withered bowers God's pure smile to bring.
In the dynasty of Gain she's a thing degraded—
  The radiant honour-sphere of home she cannot fill;
Wealth's dazzling passion-poison is before her eyes paraded
  In crowded marts and workshops where Hell's fruit is dangled still.
Fallen from its stem is the vine that climbed elated,
  It twines its tender claspers o'er the bramble and the weed;
No fruit ambrosial grows among its leaves prostrated,
  And cormorants on the blossoms dropped from Heaven's orchards feed.

Out on the wintry night look from your trellised casement,
  And see the poor girl shivering in the freezing cold;
We whisper you what wrought her sorrow and abasement;
  The angel was dragged down by the demonizer Gold.
Frost with his icicles hath stabbed her chilly bosom
  Through her thin tattered garb—ah, soon to be her pall!
The fat grave-worm will feed upon her beauty's blossom,
  And, oh! we know the bell that will toll her funeral!
Yet once her happy soul to girlhood's dream was leaping,
  And to virtue and to truth her heart beat like a hymn;
Ah, then that lovely outcast by the palace weeping,
  Dishevelled, undivine, was as pure as seraphim.

The Seasons glide along in beautiful succession,
  Bringing abundant wealth to our granaries and woods;
Spring, blossom-crowned. leads forth the brilliant procession,
  Like a young queen adorned with a robe of snowy buds.
And gailier cometh Summer, with her coral bloomage,
  Iris-bow of flowers, and full choir of singing birds;
Amid her vernal drapery the flash of splendid plumage,
  Her leaf-lips murmuring softer than an infant's words.
A breezy sweetness with rich fragrancy is blending—
  Autumn's vales are reeling ripe with serried corn;
With glad and golden life the glorious sheaves are bending,
  Like gathered saints upon the Resurrection morn.

Winter ends the drama with a crystal glimmer
  Of fairy palaces, with wreaths of snow and frost;
The twinkling sunlight, like Aladdin's lamp, doth shimmer
  Upon the silver pinnacles, like an enchanted host.
Earth, in joy arrayed, on the lap of Luxury swooneth,
  Heaven's bounty is complete 'mid poverty and pride;
But Affluence and Want God's equal love impugneth;
  And o'er the world for ever ebbs and flows the tide.
A favoured few are still from sumptuous goblets drinking;
  Luxury's board is piled, and commerce-empires rise;
The million Poor, their footstool, into scooped graves sinking,
  Spectral inanities with niggardly supplies.

Enfranchise all the People from their thraldom dreary!
  Give them the power to help themselves out of their gloom;
Bold hearts will leap in dark sepulchral homes a-weary,
  And this tear-blotted Earth again shall bravely bloom.
Intellect will burst its burning gyves asunder,
  And to ethereal regions soar with ravished gaze;
Drink bliss from starry founts in jubilance and wonder,
  Regilding Life's bright chain with Love's divinest rays.
Oh! mother England, if thou dost no longer need us,
  Wherefore build thine arch of glory over slaves?
If thy narrow breast too sterile is to feed us,
  Waft us to other realms, or give us greener graves.

Oh, Sovereign Lord, we feel we never were intended
  For wretchedness and want, and unrequited toil,
To battle 'gainst the brand of Moloch unbefriended,
  While bands of demon-wreckers plunder Labour's spoil.

We feel that we are more than hammers, shafts, and shovels,
  That our misery is not the will of Providence ;
That we were never meant for almshouses and hovels,
  But health, and happiness, and joy, and competence.
Mammon's golden heel the heart of Labour crusheth ;
  The monster, Gain, destroys those whom the tiger spares ;
Their gurgling groans God's kiss of holy quiet husheth—
  Husheth with its dew that droppeth unawares.

Digging for bread, but finding graves, Toil labours singly,
  While its united touch would Mammon's grandeur thaw.
'Tis Toil that maketh kingdoms, and Toil itself is kingly ;
  It has unthroned, ere now, the king that broke the law.
Oh, but to hear the music of the leaping fountains,
  On the loveliness of flowers to rest our fevered eyes ;
Oh, for a cooling breeze from the beamy tops of mountains,
  With our feet upon the grass—our foreheads to the skies.
No gleam of sunshine enters in our aching bosoms,
  Our little fragile Hopelings never play with flowers.
Those who live upon our toil dwell 'mid fruits and blossoms,
  While we are crushed to death against grim Pluto's towers.

Oh, ye who dwell in joy and affluence and splendour,
  Like honey-seeking bees ye flit through pleasure's bowers,
And at night are lulled to sleep, as in a swan's nest tender,
  Like children in the Summer, grown weary of the flowers.
Your dreams are never stirred by your little cygnets' wailing,
  A-gathering blissful garlands o'er flower-realms they rove,
And ye wake with airy fancies, and thoughts idly sailing,
  Like streams with fragrant borders through a singing grove.
The same ambrosial heaven in glory bendeth o'er us ;
  We are but many tints of Love's effulgent beam—
The grand essential notes of one eternal chorus,
  Like a starry anthem to the Great Supreme.

The blessed Bells ! Oh hark ! their wildest notes are hurling
  From Church-towers, calling us to Sabbath-rest and prayer,
From our black dungeon dwellings, where the smoke is curling
  Like the swarthy ringlets of a demon's hair.
From worshipping pale brows we smooth stern labour's wrinkles,
  In Joy's calm sea subsides life-wrecking Sorrow's whirl ;
In our dark hearts the light of toil-free pleasure twinkles,
  While each flower in its wine-cup melts a dewy pearl.
Ah, then we cry in o'er-souled ecstasy of feeling,
  "Oh, God, when wilt thou dash from Labour's limbs the chain,
That us Thou may'st behold in Nature's temple kneeling,
  With not unfrequent prayers, which never rise in vain?"

Oh, by wailing Woman's toil-dishevelled graces,
  By the martyr-graves of Toil's heroic line,
By the orphaned Children, with their pale, appealing faces,
  By the electric link of sympathy divine,
By the radiant hopes in faithful hearts that languish,
  By the future Brides ye would cherish and adorn,
By the souls that steep their angel-light in anguish,
  Rescue ampler leisure for the living and unborn !
Then with earthly food and heavenly visions feeden,
  Oh ! guard, like Spartans at Thermopylæ, the boon ;
Aye, as the Seraph did the jasper gates of Eden,
  With its refulgent sword beneath the sun and moon.

PHANTOMS IN THE FIRE.

UPWARD is flashing the firelight,
How weird in its gloom and glare!
Do I gaze on a palace enchanted,
Or pillar of promise there?
While on his white horse rides Winter,
And the night is growing grey,
I sit like a sun-loving swallow
Which yearns to be up and away.
The woods are stripped, and the leaves are sere
And the snow-shroud wraps the young dead Year.

Round and round it is rolling,
The world's great Vanity Fair:
Though lives be crushed in the struggle,
There is not a soul to care.
Furious and fast is spinning
The whirligig flaunting gay;
They ride who have money plenty,
They swelter who cannot pay.
I see them all in the smoke and flame—
Ambition, and Fashion, and Pride, and Fame!

The pencilling of power of vision
Paints pictures in Fancy's loom,
And lineaments of the distant
Those fantastic forms assume.
The burning coals and the vapours
I shape into wondrous things;
The dead, the unborn, and the living
Are passing on flaming wings.
But when the heart of the tree is dead,
It waiteth the axe and the Woodman's tread.

My life like a book is opened,
I tearfully scan each page,
Inscribed with my sins and sorrows,
A numerous heritage.
Memory limneth before me
The Past, like a dark grave-land,—
And ghosts of promises broken
Stalk through it in mournful band;
The radiant hopes, and the day-dreams crossed,
The bliss dissolved, and the glory lost!

Those torches of flame are lighting
My thoughts to the long-ago,
Fair faded faces of Childhood
Again are with life a-glow;
I see a cradle and coffin,
A babe and a little shroud,
A launch, a voyage, a tempest,
A bright star set in a cloud;
Visions which charmed youth's fervent soul,
But turned as black as the Prophet's scroll.

I behold my Bride in her beauty,
Ere grief her young heart had riven,
And hopes in her breast, just fledging,
Were nestling like birds of heaven.
For a starry coronal climbing,
Our souls of true joy we cheat,
And see not the mine of jewels
We trample beneath our feet.
A poor exchange is Fame's transient bliss
For a Wife's fond smile and a Child's sweet kiss.

I gaze on a bright Home broken,
Which love's sunny light did fill,
Beauty and bloom changed to ashes,
But fragrant in memory still;
Eyes that waxed dim with the watching,
Ears that to music grew cold,
Cheeks that mortality whitened,
Hearts that lie under the mould.
Those tongues of fire breathe trembling tales,
Sad, sad as the songs of the nightingales.

Oh, Heart! that feels palpitations
Of life in a noble quest,
The thrill of a tender triumph
That dwells in the peaceful breast!
'Tis well if the conscience speaketh
Of faith and of banished fears,
Of soft regrets and forgiveness,
Endeavour and dried-up tears;
Of duties done at Love's holy shrine,—
The greater bliss shall be ever thine!

Meanwhile, I am garlands wreathing,
At the World's rude feet to throw;
And many a flower I'll gather
When Spring's florescence shall glow;
When, throned in blossoming beauty,
Blithe birdies their sonnets sing;
And Joy from the chrysalis Sorrow
Bursts on its glorified wing.
But the lilies and roses are gone for aye
Which gladdened the green paths yesterday.

I KNEW THEE IN BETTER DAYS, OLD FRIEND.

I KNEW thee in better days, Old Friend,
And will not scorn thee now,
Though darkened are Fortune's rays, Old Friend,
Which once shone o'er thy brow.
Of thy kith and kin the deeds, Old Friend,
But little of kindness yield,—
Ah, these were the gaudy weeds, Old Friend,
In Friendship's harvest-field.
So come, as in days of yore, Old Friend,
Stands open my Cottage door:
Whatever may be my store,
Thou art welcome as heretofore, Old Friend.

Since Fortune's smile hath fled, Old Friend,
They care as much for thee
As the leaves on which they tread, Old Friend,
When fallen from the tree.
If angels lost thrones in Heaven, Old Friend,
Their brows with brands they'd crown;
If thrones to fiends were given, Old Friend,
They'd kneel in worship down.
Map out a brighter chart, Old Friend,
No cord of my love shall start,
Though leafless thy branches part,
There's sap in thy honest heart, Old Friend.

I care not if thy coat, old Friend,
Be coarse and overworn;
'Tis on thy mind I doat, Old Friend,
To worth and honour born.

Thy Soul with jewels stored, Old Friend,
Of genius high and grand:
No king, or prince, or lord, Old Friend,
Is greater in the land.
I think of thee still the same, Old Friend,
Though thou may'st never claim
A leaflet green of Fame.
Come, come in Friendship's name, Old Friend.

Though oft with Want thou hast fought, Old Friend,
And sorrow still is thine,
Thou hast garnered sheaves of thought, Old Friend,
While others quaffed their wine.
With love for Wife and Child, Old Friend,
I've seen thine eyes run o'er;
With accent sweet and mild, Old Friend,
I've heard thee bless the poor.
Thine is a noble mind, Old Friend,
With more than gems enshrined,
Those sympathies refined,
Which clasp all human kind, Old Friend.

Thy life-boat hath gallant been, Old Friend,
And many thou hast saved:
She struck on a rock unseen, Old Friend,
As stormy seas she braved:
But Fortune's full tide shall flow, Old Friend,
And float her o'er the steep,
And Heaven shall point her prow, Old Friend,
Beyond the billows' sweep.
So come, as in days of yore, Old Friend,
Stands open my Cottage door,
Whatever may be my store,
Thou art welcome as heretofore, Old Friend.

THE YELLOW STRAW BONNET.

Oh! touch not that bonnet, that sweet pretty bonnet,
That yellow straw bonnet in lavender laid—
Of Lucy I dream as I fondly gaze on it,
For now she is sleeping beneath the cold shade.
It fashions and frames the fine form of her face,
Her gold-threaded hair and blue eyes full of glee;
It gladdens my soul with a glimpse of her grace,
And her heart full of love that was only for me.

Love's satin chains were those ribbons of beauty,
Snow-white and pure as her beautiful breast,
Tightly they bound me till loving was duty,
I sped to her arms like a bird to its nest.
The picture, the workbox, the book she was reading—
The timepiece, the music, the dress she last wore,
The wee, scented glove set my heart afresh bleeding,
But leave them untouched as she left them of yore.

Then touch not that bonnet, that yellow straw bonnet,
Oh! now it is sacred to sorrow and me;
It bringeth sweet balm as I weeping gaze on it,
For there the kind face of my Darling I see.
Yes, Heaven restores the dear flowers that have faded,
Faces long lost will revisit our dreams,
The freshness of love is for ever unshaded;
Break not the vision which transiently gleams.

When first I beheld her in girlhood she wore it,
Sunshine of innocence shone in her smile,
And oft where 'tis shrined I shall kneel to adore it,
Though fountains of feeling are broken the while.
Dearer was she than my Sister and Mother,
Serene as a star, and as fair as a flower,
For Lucy I lived—her alone and no other:
Love was her empire, and beauty her dower.

THE CHILD AND THE DAISY.

I stood beside an Orchard in the lane,
When Summer's ardent kiss made blush the boughs;
And at the shock the blossoms on my brows,
Like snow-flakes fell with pink and rosy stain.
The Song-birds held their gala 'mong the leaves,
And fields with flowers o'erflowed, a blessed boon
Poured in the lap of Nature's heiress, June.
The clematis climbed o'er the Cottage-eaves;
But all the lovely landscape round was tame,
Till, like a Butterfly on gaysome wing,
A tiny Child with rippling ringlets came,
And with her laughter made the welkin ring.
A Daisy grew an Apple-tree beneath;
The rosy Fairy culled it with her teeth.

SONG OF THE ARTISAN.

Since we twain were one, my own true Wife,
No harbourage have we known from strife;
But chequered has been our lot in life
With many a sob and sorrow.
Hosannas to God we ever did raise,
And thanked Him for all His yesterdays,
And the good He would send to-morrow.

Our lot has not been a balmy sigh
On the Summer's breeze borne up the sky;
We never might down on roses lie,
Like Pleasure's pale perfumed minions.
Our home was never an ark of rest,
The Deluge-dove is our emblem best,
On its wet and weary pinions.

Deep was the love that King Edward bore,
When a cross he raised in days of yore,
Where rested the corse of Eleanore.
Oh! there would be several crosses,
If one were built for each dear-loved child
That died on our pilgrim-march so wild,
And now sleeps under the mosses.

Though honey-mouthed friends away had fled,
As each precious babe in its shroud lay dead,
And our bitter tears were in secret shed,
Pure Love's golden links never rusted.
In trouble they bound us but tighter and truer;
The anchor that held them was faithful and sure;
For only in God have we trusted.

A legend there is, in History told,
Of a Miser who loved more than life his gold;
But, whilst his heart was so hard and cold,
His Daughter's was full of pity.
A basket of bread on her arm she bore,
And forth she went to the hungry poor,
For Famine stalked over the city.

At the garden-gate she met her Sire.
"What hast thou there?" he asked with fire.
"Roses," she answered, to soothe his ire;
And then he said, "Show me the posies!"
And lo! the bread-leaves were roses red.
She went on her way, and to loaves of bread
Again God had changed the roses!

And oh! when Terrors have barred our way,
And briers and thorns on our pathway lay,
God's hand has removed them day by day,
The brambles with flowers adorning.
For oft and oft, through labouring years,
We have gone to rest in anguish and tears,
And joy has come in the morning.

One by one have Life's blossoms decayed,
Still we are voyaging, sore afraid,
Calm as the twilight's dim-falling shade,
Creep over us silence and sorrow.
But Love's soft star on the breast of eve,
Pure-smiling, whispers, "Oh! cease to grieve,
And ever trust God for to-morrow."

WOMAN'S CHARITY.

'Twas a dark, dark hour of cheerless gloom,
The July day was misty and wet,
The chaliced flowers had lost their bloom,
And the Man of Toil sat down to fret.
He gazed in the pale, sad face of his Wife,
He clasped to his breast his hungry Child,
Want's nightmare heavily sat on his life,
His brain was maddened, his heart was wild.

Yet the rich corn ripened its stainless gold,
And rosying flowers clothed lawn and lea;
But the lavish Summer its wealth unrolled
In vain, oh, Man of Toil, for thee!

There was plenty on Earth for man and beast,
For Heaven is kind, though man complains;
But he was no guest at the Lord's rich feast,
For poverty bound him in sorrow and chains.

The rich looked down with a pitiless eye,
As with mad, blind grope Pain's thorns he trod;
But, when Wealth's golden stream runs dry,
How bare their hearts in the sight of God!
At length an angel with form of clay
Appeared at his door, with accent bland;
She lit Life's cloud with a heavenly ray—
God sent his gift by a Woman's hand!

THE HANDLOOM WEAVER TO THE LATE-RETURNING SWALLOW.

Beautiful builder of the graceful wing,
I bid thee merry welcome from the palms
'Mongst which long-time thou hast been wandering,
While flowers their incense breathed like golden psalms.
Thy nest awaits thine architectural care,
Its arch like some time-ruined home is bare,
And desolate appears its ample floor.
Oh, speed thee, Freedom's symbol, from afar,
On wings as rapid as the lightning-car,
And bring the flowers and fragrance to our shore.

Summer goes forth to meet thee by the Sea,
Where, on a stream of sunshine, thou art flying
With changeful evolutions merrily
Towards the rainbow and the green hill hieing.
From prisoned wings the fetters Summer reaves,
The Flowers like banners wave their silken leaves,
The old mossed thatches mellow in the Sun,
The river shallows murmur of thy coming,
And drowsily the honey-bees are humming
O'er cups of Hippocrene, thou welcome one!

As I behold thy downy ivory breast,
An Angel cometh with a golden key,
And for the treasures which within it rest,
Unlocks the casket of my memory.
My Childhood's paradisal world I see,
Ere I, a worm, loved Heaven's star, Poesy;
Before Hope in deceitful mask came screened,
And like an Angel led me by the hand,
To where Fame waits to crown her glorious band—
Then glared in on me like a laughing fiend.

But what of sorrow knowest thou, blithe Bird?
A Summer-life among the flowers is thine;
Thy brain with thoughts of fame is never stirred,
But dreams dig graves into this heart of mine.
Thou art a sad late-comer, as I came
Too late into the world for love or fame;

Or did some black storm meet thee on the way,
As it met me amid the deeps of Life,
And drove me from my course with bitter strife,
Till on the beach a shattered wreck I lay?

What hast thou seen, thou wanderer of the deep—
The radiant Morning bursting on the clime
Where Liberty from her inglorious sleep
As from a marble tomb, sprang up sublime?
Do clashing arms ring o'er the far blue wave,
For birthright-independence do the brave
Stand side by side, their country to defend?
My soul fights with them, though inured to toil,
Chained to the wheels of Wealth which bears the spoil:
But there are giant-hearts the bonds to rend.

Oh, while perpetual Summer, Bird, is thine,
I have not known a Summer-time for years;
I sought it, but it fled this heart of mine,
My life a sorrowing April-day of tears.
Amid my bleakest winter of despair,
My heart lied to itself in dreams most fair,
Singing, "Hope's spring in beauty yet will wave,
And Birds of Joy their wings spread o'er the Soul,
And from the sunny hills the snow will roll:"
Yet here I stumble to an unknown grave.

Thou mayst have crossed the broad Atlantic shore
Where the gold-bartered Slave is borne afar
From that dear land his eyes shall see no more
But in the brightness of the Northern Star.
Oh, hast thou heard his agonizing cry,
With thee on Freedom's glorious wings to fly
To native climes in visions visited?
Whilst thou like sunshine speed'st across the Sea,
Mocking his Soul with dreams of Liberty
As thou dost mine when every hope is fled.

Oh, tell me not of sunny Seas and Isles,
Of honey-sipping bees in almond-bowers,
Of gorgeous-wingèd birds and splendour-smiles,
Of unveiled dawns o'er odorous orient flowers,
Of groves that list to Childhood's merry shout,
And vineyards with their riches bursting out,
And glad hills robed in hyacinthine bloom:
While dreams of visionary garlands throng
My Soul, which, like a blinded Bird of Song,
Sings in this close captivity and gloom.

Oh, I would fly with thee from City strife,
To those fair Isles across the Southern Seas,
Far from this restless sigh and surge of life,
Lapped in the gardens of Hesperidès!
Then would I linger by the glorious Rhine—
Gaze on its grey old castles, where the vine,
Delighted, wreaths its fond arms night and day;
Out of this Midas-crush of soulless men,
To feel myself with Nature once again,
And pass a brief balm-breathing life away.

WORK, WAIT, AND WIN.

I SAT by the marge of the Ocean,
Whose silvery waves to the strand
Were borne with a musical motion,
So peaceful, and solemn, and grand,
Reviewing the Past and regretting,
While Summer its glories unrolled—
The sun in his sapphire home setting
'Mid splendour of purple and gold.

I said, "What is life?—the old story,
Earth, ocean, and sky are the same—
The same, and yet changing in glory,
As colours that flash in the flame;
And man as of old seeketh pleasure,
Which but for a moment can bloom,
Forgetting that love is a treasure,
Which kindles a star in the gloom.

"Sing, sing, thy soft tremulous trebles,
Oh, true-hearted bird on the tree,
Diving for pearls I've found pebbles,
And what is existence to me?
The toss-ball of Fortune, I labour,
And polish my pebbles each hour,
The goddess's minion, my neighbour,
Grows rich in a Danaë shower.

"Rocky the ground I've been ploughing,
No living blade gladdens my sight,
And after most diligent sowing
Thought's harvest has suffered a blight
I sought for fair flowers in the meadows,
And found only brambles and weeds;
And life is fast flying 'mid shadows,
Which darken the best of my deeds."

Oh, then, as the Songster kept singing,
I thanked for its music the bird;
A voice in my spirit was singing—
"Sing on, though thy song be unheard!
Many a sweet floweret is sighing,
To which never cometh the bee;
And, oh, whether living or dying,
God's work should be sacred to thee."

Then I marked on the sand, a wight tracin
Strange letters, while people looked on;
The waves up the beach soon came racing
And quickly the figures were gone.
But away from the seaside comers,
His name a youth carved in the rock,
To be seen for a hundred summers
High over the billows' wild shock.

Methought, there's a lesson worth knowin
Write deeply thy name on man's heart;
Up there, in God's sight, 'twill be glowin
While ages like dead leaves depart.
Work on in the spirit of duty,
Despair not, but climb to the goal;
Oh, worship thy heart's dream of beauty,
And sing from thy innermost soul.

THE REFORMED DRUNKARD AT HIS WIFE'S GRAVE.

OH, gentle be thy sleep, my Love,
Where cypress-curtains wave;
The soft arms of the grass, my Love,
Are folded round thy grave.
The trees are crowned with summer-snow,
The cuckoo shouts from leafy bough,
Whilst thou, fair Flower, art in the mould,
Plucked from my breast by fingers cold.

I steep the roses there, my Love,
With wild tears flowing on;
The world is but a grave, my Love,
Since thou, my Life, art gone.
And many years away have rolled
Since last I kissed thy lips so cold;
Ere poison-glittered cups became
My anguish deep, my children's shame.

Thou didst not then reproach, my Love,
Though sad thine Angel brow,
Where hung thy golden locks, my Love,
Like sunbeams over snow.
Beamed on me that last look of thine,
Like sunset on a shattered pine;
And now my lonely spirit seems
The broken nest of perished dreams.

Whilst floating o'er Life's sea, my Love,
Rose fair Hope's Eden isle;
Thy truth above me shone, my Love,
Bright as a rainbow's smile.
And thou didst leave thy parent's side,
To be for aye my faithful Bride;
Yet didst in uncomplaining pain
Droop like a white rose dashed with rain.

They ask me where thou art, my Love,
Each stammering orphan child;
I point them o'er the hills, my Love,
Beyond the tempest wild.
And when they kneel beside thy chair,
They breathe thy name in every prayer;
Thy presence seems not yet withdrawn,
Thou wounded dove! thou stricken fawn!

Flower of my heart wert thou, my Love,
Thy soul a fragrant sigh,
Which on prayer's golden breath, my Love,
Ascended to the sky;
My precious pearl, my shining gem,
My household joy, my diadem!
Oh, may we drink the sacred balm,
Where broods the everlasting calm!

THE DREAM OF LITTLE ALICE.

GLEAMED the sunset red on a lowly bed
Where a dying Maiden reclined:
Her Mother supported her suffering head,
And soothed her with sympathy kind.

A Boy of eleven, a Daughter of seven,
And an Infant of winters three,
Knelt down to breathe to their Saviour in heaven
Their prayers by their Mother's knee.

From the World's loud din her Father came in:
"Is Alice no better?" he cried;
And he tenderly kissed her lips so thin,
And nestled her close to his side.
"Little Darling," said he, as she lay on his knee,
"It will soon be fair Christmas morn."
"I am glad of that, dearest Father," said she;
"For the Child's best Friend was then born."

There was nothing to eat for those Children sweet,
With Death looking in at the door;
While their Grandmother's house, at the end of the street,
Of wealth had a plentiful store.
"Ah! thither I'll go, thro' the wind and snow,"
Said the Wife! "and I'll ask for bread.
My Mother shall know of our want and our woe,
Or else our sick Child will be dead.

"From her heart and home I was doomed to roam,
For marrying 'gainst her will;
I'll beg on my knees from her table a crumb,
For my poor little Alice so ill."
Her shivering form thro' the midnight storm
Was shadow-like seen to move;
She would not have cared if *their* limbs had been warm,
Whom gently she folded in love.

Unbending and stern as the force of fate,
Her Mother was deaf to her prayer.
The Daughter, heart-broken, was turned from the gate,
And lifeless she dropped in despair.
From a troubled dream Alice woke, a gleam
Of stars in her eloquent eyes;
"Oh! Father, I've seen, by the moon's pale beam,
My Mother dear pass to the skies.

"It was only a dream, there's snow on her track,
Hark! the twelfth chime hangs in the air.
I hope I shall live till my Mother comes back,
To sit by my couch in her chair.
If I die, you must say I have gone to play
In the garden of God above,
And the meadows of Heaven, whose flowers are gay
With the fadeless glory of love.

"One kiss, Father dear, you must shed no tear;
Sweet Sisterling, give me your hand.
My Mother, my own loving Mother, is here,
And a beautiful white-robed band."
No fancy can paint that childish saint,
So blooming with glorified charms:
Fair as a flower, outspent, and faint,
She died in her dear Father's arms.

BONNIE TOMMY, THE BLACKSMITH'S CHILD.

WEARY of the day's turmoil,
And the stern world's fretful jar,
Homeward wending from my toil,
Tommy spied me from afar.
I could hear his gleeful shout
Ring a hundred yards or more,
As he leapt in laughter out
To meet "daddy" at the door.

Gaily as a singing-bird
He would perch upon my chair,
And my inmost soul was stirred
When I saw him kneel at prayer;
And our earnest eyes grew wet
As the thought came flitting o'er:
"He will be an Angel yet
Waiting for us at Heaven's door."

Home I came one hapless night,
Of my household treasures proud;
But, alas! the awful sight—
There lay Tommy in his shroud;
Little heart for ever stilled,
It will beat to mine no more;
He was killed—my Boy was killed—
While he played beside the door.

Yes, his marbly form at rest
On the blood-stained pillow lay,
With his hands crossed o'er his breast,
Where the pulse had ceased to play.
Precious Pet! he was the first
Tender bud our love-tree bore,
And I thought my heart would burst
When the wee box left the door.

In the Churchyard grey and old
Sleeps he in a sacred spot:
I have gathered from the mould
Just one sweet "Forget me-not;"
And it seems to whisper mild
To my spirit sad and sore,
"Christ will not forget the Child
He has beckoned from your door."

I bewail his dear sweet face,
Prattling lips and joyous song;
And the charms and frolic grace
That to childhood's hour belong.
But my scalding tear-drops roll
For the loving heart he bore,
And the yearning seraph-soul
That soared early from the door.

There 's his headless wooden horse,
And his cart without a wheel!
Ah! they fill me with remorse,
Which no earthly balm can heal;
For I feel there's something fled
That will come again no more,
And our hearth seems cold and dead
Since we missed him from the door.

No more his pattering feet
Will be trotting out and in;
And no more the quiet street
Will resound his merry din.
Bonnie Tommy lies below
The cold earth's snowy floor;
Where he sleeps the Angels know,
Gentle watchers at the door.

Now Memory's witching spell
Brings him back my heart to bless;
And he comes awhile to dwell,
With his winsome fond caress,
With his dimpled cheek and smile,
With his laughter as of yore.
With his warm and winning guile,
And I clasp him at the door.

Yet methinks our Bird of Love,
While I kiss his sunny curl,
Waits for us in bliss above
By the shining gates of pearl.
Falls the rain and blows the blast,
But he feels the storm no more;
When we enter Heaven at last,
He will meet us at the door.

THE HIGHLAND SHEPHERD TO HIS DOG.

MY Highland pet, Jack, I shall pat him no more,
His deer-stalking, flock-tending struggles are o'er:
The shrill-sounding whistle shall break not his rest:
He sleeps 'neath the sod with the flowers on his breast.

He was Scotch from his snout to the tip of his tail,
Keen, cunning, and quick, when he scented the trail:
So silent and watchful, you heard not his bark,
Until he was fairly in view of his mark.

His wisdom was deep, as his temper was mild,
He never would injure man, woman, or child:
So faithful in friendship, so constant in love,
As bold as a lion, yet meek as a dove.

Oh! oft have I seen him dash into the wave,
Some poor fellow-creature from drowning to save:
One quick, cheery note was enough to inspire
My brave shaggy friend with invincible fire.

A stranger once at him a heavy stick threw,
But little of Jack's disposition he knew.
Jack's dignity then was so modest and sweet,
He carried the stick to his enemy's feet.

The wrongs I have done him he always forgave,
Content with a little, so gentle, yet brave:
If I sold him for lucre, as sure as the Mail,
He found his way home, and came wagging his tail.

Oh! why then refuse him the meed of a song?
For few have his worth 'mid humanity's throng:
Even Kings and their subjects the virtues oft lack,
Which dwelt in the heart of my honest dog, Jack.

The Judge on the bench, and the Clown on the fence,
Might learn from his conduct a lesson of sense.
Not much did he say; but he thought a great deal:
His feelings were deeper than words could reveal.

He always drank water. Strong Drink he abhorred.
You never could say he was drunk as a lord;
But Jack had his *whine*, though he led with delight
A life that was spotless, his wool was so white.

THE MISER AND THE ROBBER.

THE Miser he dwelt in a castle old;
He had no friend in the world but gold:
The walls were mouldy, the windows dim,
And hung with cobweb-tapestry grim;
Bars on the shutters and bolts on the doors,
Dust on the furniture, shelves, and floors.

'Twas Christmas Eve, he was sitting alone,
The embers were black on his cold hearthstone.
He barred his windows, he bolted his door,
And counted his heaps of gold o'er and o'er,
And then to his coffers he crept away,
Like a crafty old fox, to earth his prey.

He heard the Bells from a hundred towers
Praise God through the blessed Christmas hours,
Heard carols of Christ and the Better Land,
And he half stretched out but withdrew his hand;
For the Christmas chimes were dull and cold,
Compared with the chink of his hoarded gold.

He mourned that the people forgot their prayers;
That youth was caught in delusive snares;
That churches were cold and genius had fled;
And truth was a vagrant, unhoused, and unfed;
And his solemn face grew lank and black,
But a wedge of his gold he gave not back.

He falsified faith and love and truth;
The canker of gold gnawed his heart, in sooth;
He deemed the world was but meant to be
The rich estate of such grubs as he,
Whose wealth resembles the barren soil
Which gives no return to the tiller's toil.

He shivering sat in his dingy room,
Like a spider that weaves its web in gloom.
The night was cold and the hour was late,
And a knock he heard at his rusty gate:
A grey-haired Beggar stood starving there:
But he told him, "Begone!" and mocked his prayer.

A little Child came to his door and knocked;
But his heart with a golden key was locked,
And bolted fast with his silver bars,
And the Orphan's wail went up to the stars:
She wandered away from his castle door,
And died on the moorland cold and hoar.

Another knock, slow and faint—"Who's there?"
"A Widow, who craves thy succouring care."
"Begone! I've just spurned an orphan Child,
And shall I regard *thy* pleadings wild?"
And he thanked his God no thief was there,
His gold to plunder, his soul to scare.

Footsteps at length with a terrible tread,
And the Miser's heart was filled with dread;
Stealthily still in the darkness heard,
Like the rustling wing of a midnight bird.
"Who's there?" he cried, but no answer came,
And as if with the ague shook his frame.

He heard the crash of the coffer-lid,
In the secret place where his gold was hid;
Then another crash and another bang,
And, like a wild beast, from his den he sprang:
Rushed into the cave where his money lay,
And there in amazement stood at bay.

A figure confronted him, strong and bold,
With the gathered heaps of his shining gold;

The Robber had broken his bolts at last,
And the Miser beheld him with fear aghast,
Enchained like a dog, while the Burglar's hand
Had grasped his throat like an iron band.

"Ah! ah!" laughed the Robber, "thou glittering snake,
Well may thy spirit with horror quake,
With the golden lust in thy heart and brain,
Now call on thy yellow god in vain:
It will not hear thee, although thou cry—
It will not feed thee, although thou die!"

The Miser lay bound with a gag in his mouth,
Like a brute that froths in the burning south;
His tongue, like a serpent's, quivered and hissed,
And his eyeballs glared through a lurid mist.
But the Robber laughed, "Ah! ah!" at his fear,
And regaled himself with the best of cheer.

And day after day he ate and drank,
While the Miser with sure starvation sank,
Piteously groaning, "Oh! give me bread,
Or a drop of water before I'm dead."
Regardless the Robber sat down to dine,
And quaffed a bottle of rare old wine.

"Look at my face," the fierce Robber cried,
"Dost know me now as I stand by thy side?
Gaze on this scar by thy dagger made,
When left for dead in yon far-off glade.
Of this base-born metal, say which is mine,
For I would not stain my soul with thine."

Then the Miser strove his head to raise,
And he looked around with a vacant gaze,
For he knew the man he had sought to kill,
In a foreign land when the night was still,
And madness swept o'er his frenzied brain,
Like hot sand borne by the hurricane.

Whining and gaunt as a famished hound,
The Miser lay curled on the barren ground;
The gurgle of death in his skinny throat,
His eyes no more on his gold would gloat.
No mercy he showed, without mercy he died,
With glittering hoards of wealth by his side.

THE CHILD OF THE WRECK.

THE Wrecker sat in his Cabin dim,
On the bearded, black sea-shore,
Of the gale he heard the martial hymn
To the tramp of surges hoar.
That outcast Mariner whispered low
To a fair Child by his side:
"List, Daughter, how the storm-winds blow
Across the churlish tide!"

That fairy Girl, when an infant dear,
He saved from a broken wreck,
And kept her his lonely life to cheer,
Of his Cabin the one bright speck.
And she clung to him as the tendril clings
To the ruin old and grey,
And she sang to him as the night-bird sing,
In the deep dark woods her lay.

"Oh! Father," she said, "what mean those cries
That rise from the troubled main?"
And on her he fixed his scorpion eyes,
And replied, "'Tis the hurricane!
Quick, light my torch; there's an awful fog;
I hear some bursting shocks.
My Sea-Flower, lay thee down with the dog,
While I away to the rocks."

But not in pity his torch did glare
Along the Norway coast:
His heart was deaf to a drowning prayer,
But trembled before a ghost.
And often the souls of untaught men
With Superstition teem,
And the ghosts of the Past exist again
Like the phantoms of a dream.

His share of the plunder washed ashore
That old sea-spider seized,
Of a half-drowned Woman the wealthy store
His greedy maw appeased.
Her helpless form to his Hut he took,
As if with a tender care;
No mercy was in his grisly look,
But a bold and fiery glare.

A gold locket gleamed on the Lady's breast—
A gem in a bed of snow;
Her tresses lay in luxurious rest,
Dishevelled and drooping low.
On that desolate coast so fair a thing
Never before was seen;
On her finger sparkled a jewelled ring
Of glorious glittering sheen.

The Wrecker bent o'er her with gleaming knife,
And cut off her finger white,
When the Woman appeared to start to life,
And the Wrecker recoiled in fright.
In the shadow of his rocky den
He glared upon his prey,
And loud he laughed in his guilt again,
So like a corpse she lay.

She ope'd her lips and breathed a prayer,
And with a stare half dead
She gazed on the little Maiden fair
Who slumbered in her bed.
"Build thou a fire in the chimney nook,"
Quoth he to the little Fay;
"What, scared? go banish that frightened look,
The dead are still alway."

The Maiden crept forth and 'gan to speak,
Her soft voice called his name;
There was no blush on his ghastly cheek,
In his heart no pang of shame:
He sternly gazed on the wond'ring Girl,
As with horror throbbed her brain,
And back from her forehead thrust a curl,
Leaving there a crimson stain.

She said, "I have had a wondrous dream"—
And her eyes grew large and wild—
"Methought a Lady of beauty extreme
Came hither for me, her Child;

And she gave you gold in shining heaps,
But you took her life away.
What Lady is this who so calmly sleeps—
Whence came she, Father, say ?"

He went and rambled along the shore,
Conscience his spirit smote ;
And in every sound the billows bore
"Murder!" appeared to float.
Oh ! could he but die, that haunting spell
Would follow him everywhere,
Like a demon dragging him down to Hell
With its grip clenched in his hair.

Sprang up, red-bright, on the Wrecker's hearth,
A flame like a spirit glad,
Carolling wild in its sparkling mirth,
To the Maiden lone and sad.
Then out it leapt, on the bare mud-wall,
Playing its freaks at will,
And fell on the corse in its blanket-pall,
With forehead so white and still.

The Girl, so lone, cast a furtive glance,
But she did not feel afraid,
Though from the shroud, by a flamelet's dance,
She saw a hand had strayed.
Again she turned, with unearthly stare,
The Victim's head was raised.
The wounded breast to the light lay bare,
On the Child the Lady gazed.

Then the Lady stepped to the Maiden's side,
And stood by the fitful fire ;
She staunched the wounds of the knife, and cried,
"The Wrecker is not thy Sire !
His life was lost on yon fatal reef,
Where down our good ship went ;
Oh ! surely to save my Child from grief,
Me hither some Angel sent.

"Wilt go with me from this place unblessed—
This haunt of a branded Cain ?
My Daughter shall dwell in a Summer nest
Safe-sheltered from wind and rain."
"Yes, Mother dear, I will go with thee,"
She said, with a tender thrill ;
"In our little Boat let us put to sea,
For now the storm is still."

Before the dawn of the morning light,
They wandered along the shore ;
And the sea was paved with moonbeams bright,
And hushed was the breakers' roar.
From the caverned rocks which lined the beach
The Wrecker he called them back ;
But soon they were far beyond his reach,
On the ocean's silvery track.

But whether within the flesh or out,
His soul could never tell ;
For when in his Hut he looked about,
On them his eyeballs fell.
Two Spectres sat on two logs of wood,
Each on the other smiled ;
One was a Woman with stain of blood,
The other a little Child.

A viper seemed gnawing his heart and brain,
Nought joy could bring to him ;
And lost was the power of that lulling bane,
The sparkling goblet's brim.
On the crags he shrieked, "Back ! Spectres, back !
Or take my spirit sore,
Ye Ghosts in white, and ye Fiends in black !"
Then plunged, and rose no more.

THE DEAD MAN IN THE LIGHTHOUSE.

THE Lighthouse shone with a rosy face,
As a bow looks out from a cloud,
Where the reckless billows were running a race,
To weave the poor Mariner's shroud.
Like a ruby gem, on the bleak, black rock,
The lamp flung its rays afar ;
Below it the breakers' thunder shock,—
Above it eve's peaceful star.
And every night,
Two men kept bright
The Beacon's revolving blaze,
But at length one died
By the other's side,
And fixed was the dead man's gaze.

The Moon looked forth, like an Angel's eye
Heavy with tears in the gloom ;
But never a sail for days came nigh
Those twain in the Lighthouse room.
The living man's brain whirled dark with dread
At his comrade's glassy stare,
But Conscience said, "Don't bury the dead,
Lest Murder shriek on the air."
The flag on the mast
Was seen at last,
And a Boat pushed from the shore ;
But those hours of fear,
With the dead so near,
The Watcher forgot no more.

This is the fate of many a heart,
By hearths that seem gay and bright,
To linger with Death till the heartstrings start,
Though married in Heaven's own sight ;
To a putrid corse they are linked through Life,
And they gaze on its staring eye,
And they bear their loneliness, pain, and strife,
Till God's hand severs the tie.
And trials and tears,
Through terrible years,
In unseen bitterness roll :
But the kind release
Brings hope and peace
To the trembling desolate Soul.

THE FATAL ARROW.

THE King beheld a treasure rare :
It was not gems or gold :
It was a Damsel, young and fair,
Within a Castle old.

And he was one who travelled far
'Mid other lands and scenes,
And Councils held of love and war
With foreign Kings and Queens.

But all the Monarch's intrigues failed
The Maiden's heart to steal:
The passions that with him prevailed
She was not born to feel.
"Then rally now, my fighting men,"
Said he, "To arms! to arms!
On, to the field of strife again,
To conquer Beauty's charms."

Forth, then, the fortress walls to storm,
He dashed with all his band;
And from the height the Damsel's form
Was seen to proudly stand.
Her hyacinthine hair streamed far,
Her blue eyes beamed with grace,
And beauteous as some holy star
Appeared her blooming face.

Her noble Brother near her stood,
Upon the rampart strong,
To see the King ride through the wood
Amid his dazzling throng:
Then to his chin his shaft he drew,
And boldly twanged the string;
And swift as light the arrow flew,
And prostrate struck the King.

"Oh, hither bring," exclaimed the King,
"That Archer brave and bold!
Before my soul hath taken wing
His face I would behold."
Then to his tent they brought the Boy,
A stripling tall and proud:
He glanced around with fearless joy;
The Monarch spoke aloud:

"Say, why didst thou select the King
For thy most murderous dart?
Was there no other in the ring
Who owned so base a heart?"
"My Father by thine arrow fell,
My Brothers thou hast slain,
With deeper guilt I know too well
Thy memory thou wouldst stain.

"Do what thou wilt, my Sister dear
Is now beyond thy power;
And who for thee will shed a tear
When comes thy dying hour?
Red is thy sword, from point to hilt,
Ignobly shouldst thou die;
By blood and guilt thy throne was built,
A Curse beneath the sky."

There is a King, a dreadful King,
Who o'er the wide world reigns;
With groans he makes the welkin ring,
And binds the soul with chains.
King Bacchus is the Monarch's name:
He slays the good and brave.
Oh youthful race, be this your aim,
To hurl him to the grave!

BEN RYAN, THE INDIAN TIGER HUNTER.

By Indian seas, Ben Ryan wooed
An Indian damsel young:
At eve before her Cabin door
The dark-eyed beauty sung.
Her Father was an Indian Chief,
With quiver, spear, and plume;
And Claudine was her Mother's star
Amid the forest-gloom.
'Mid woods and rocks their Cabin stood,
Where rolled the Ganges broad,
By islands where the Mango-tree
Bent 'neath its juicy load.
Gigantic shrubs the Cabin wreathed,
And spicy odours cast:
Wild deer and brilliant birds reposed
'Mid foliage dense and vast.

Within a maize-sown plot of ground
There played the Chieftain's boy,
A blooming child of three sweet years,
His Mother's flower of joy.
While sailed the Chieftain on the lake,
And paddled his canoe,
A Tiger snatched the toddling thing
Before his startled view.
Around the spot the chase was hot;
But oh! pursuit was vain:
His jungle-ground the brute had found
Beyond the mountain-chain.

The Father's feelings who can tell,
The Mother's anguish deep,
The Sister's hopeless grief who saw
The Tiger's fearful leap.
With drops of blood the grass was stained
Along the Monster's trail;
He long had ravaged flocks and herds,
Night-prowling round the vale.

Ben Ryan heard the dreadful news.
A Hunter British-born,
He grasped his rifle, clasped his belt,
And spoke of fear with scorn.
"Before high heaven, I swear," quoth he,
"To bring the Tiger's hide,
And spread it on the Cabin floor,
A carpet for my Bride."

Away he dashed o'er torrents deep,
Through thickets dark and dim,
By rocky pass and deadly swamp,
And caverns hoar and grim;
His Steed was good, his eye was true,
His heart was young and bold:
While followed fast his keen blood-hound,
Worth heaps of Indian gold.

But other eyes had watched his steps,
A Spaniard glib and bland,
Named Pontius Hawk—a rival swain
For Claudine's envied hand.
He spared no pain his end to gain,
An oily cut-throat he,
Who, to obtain the honey sweet,
Would sacrifice the tree.

The Tiger, Buffalo, or Bear
  Might warn you by a growl;
He drew his dagger in the dark,
  And loved it like an owl.

Ben Ryan found the Tiger's track,
  By bones, and blood, and hair.
Through wiry jungle-grass he rode,
  To beard him in his lair.
Then suddenly, while winding round
  A creek beside the wave,
He saw two eyes that tunnels made
  Of fire, deep in a cave.
But ere his levelled tube had flashed
  One of the tunnels through,
The brambles and the brushwood crashed,
  And out the Tiger flew.
He wheeled his Steed so dexterously
  The Monster missed his mark;
And turned to spring upon the Hound,
  Made furious by his bark.
One well-timed shot Ben Ryan fired,
  He howling died with pain;
Full length the fierce Marauder lay,
  Two bullets in his brain.

Ben Ryan searched the jungle round,
  For traces of the Child;
But every fragment was consumed,
  And vengeance made him wild.
Yet blood besmeared the cavern walls,
  Bones strewed its horrid floor;
And shreds which once clad human limbs
  Lay scattered, dyed with gore.

He homeward bore the Tiger's skin,
  The Hunter's dearest prize,
A trophy which but few could win,
  Beneath those tropic skies.
And when a Tiger there is slain,
  They raise it on a car,
And make a grand procession-day,
  To spread the news afar.
But as he rode right joyously
  Along the mountain track,
The Tiger's hide, a trapping gay,
  Across his charger's back,
He saw six mounted Horsemen ride
  The narrow pass adown,
Like Indian scouts with dusky brows,
  Still darker with a frown.
"Halt!" said the Chief, "you're fearful odds,"
  "So shall we make thee yield."
One fired a shot, 'twas Pontius Hawk:
  Ben Ryan's fate was sealed.
They threw him down a deep ravine,
  And from his waist did steal
His gold-wrought girdle, made of yore
  By Claudine's spinning-wheel.
The Tiger's skin they made their prize,
  The bravest ever won:
His Dog had marked one ruffian's throat,
  His noble Steed was gone.

Then Pontius Hawk to Claudine went,
  In marriage asked her hand.
"Ben Ryan's dead," the Spaniard said,
  In accents low and bland.
"We found the Tiger in his lair,
  Which at our challenge fought,
And dealt a carnage in our ranks,
  Till low the beast was brought.
Ben Ryan was unhorsed, and rolled
  In gore amid the dust:
He proved a craven at the last,
  Mine was the crowning thrust.
Here, take the Monster's velvet vest,
  Starred with those spots of white,
Few royal Tigers known possess
  So beautiful and bright.
Thrown o'er thy couch 'twill look so gay,
  So charming, and so neat,
Thou well might'st deem the conquered beast
  Crouched at thy sandalled feet.
The Child, thy Brother dear, is killed:
  We saw his garments strewn
On bush and thorn, while drops of blood
  Fringed lakelet and lagoon.
This gold-wrought girdle from his waist,
  This mystic charm and ring,
Ben Ryan, with his dying breath,
  To Claudine bade me bring."

Time flew away, to ne'er return,
  And left, as on he flew,
His twin-born children, Night and Day,
  Bright smiles and tears of dew.
Time maketh wounds, and cures them soon,
  Brings Grief as well as Joy;
Destroyer and Consoler both,
  He makes the heart his toy.
The Wedding-day at length came round
  Of Pontius and Claudine.
He wore a Chieftain's gorgeous plumes,
  And she wore raiment fine.
A Tiger's ears clad all his breast,
  Wrought by the Indian Maid.
A castanet of Tigers' teeth
  And bones and claws he played.
The Father and the Mother blessed
  The Bridegroom and the Bride;
And music, dancing, revelry,
  Were all the Indian's pride.

When lo! a Stranger joined the guests,
  Clad in a garb uncouth;
His cheeks were lean, his sunken eyes
  Had lost the fire of youth.
All silently he sat him down
  Beside the Cabin door,
O'ershaded by the cocoa-trees,
  And plants which blossoms bore.
Merrily danced the festive throng,
  And quaffed the cocoa-wine,
For all the Gentoos mustered strong,
  To dance, and drink, and dine.
The Tribe a warrior brave admired,
  And all adored the right,
And every soul with zeal was fired,
  If fiercely raged the fight.
While Pontius Hawk and Claudine danced,
  The Stranger stepped between;
His stifled love its barrier burst
  To claim its lawful Queen.
He threw aside his garb uncouth,
  His turban and disguise;

And all beheld that noble youth,
  Ben Ryan, with surprise.
Said he, "On equal terms we meet,
  Now draw thy sword, or rue;
For one of us must die, thou cheat,
  While earth and heaven shall view."
Clash met their swords, the Spaniard fell,
  His match too well he found,
And dying, he confessed his crime
  To all the people round.
A swarthy Chief the dark-haired Child
  Amid the circle led:
Saved from the Tiger's fangs, he smiled
  Whom all believed was dead.
"Our tribe of emigrants had scared
  The Tiger from his prey;
But sadly hurt, we took," he said,
  "This wandering Boy away.
Our route," quoth he, "lay through the glade,
  Where Pontius and his crew
Had plied their ghastly murderous trade:
  We saved Ben Ryan too.
We camped awhile the hills among;
  For both were wounded sore:
And when the Child and he grew strong,
  Came here; I know no more."

Then shouts of gladness rent the skies,
  The Women kissed the Child.
Its parents, breathing prayers and sighs,
  With Joy were almost wild.
Ben Ryan and his Claudine dear,
  Rejoicing much, were wed;
And Indian Chiefs, from far and near,
  Brought plumes to deck his head.

CARACTACUS AT ROME.

WHAT mean those banners blazing in the burning noon-tide sun?
Have those chariots and horsemen some splendid victory won?
Why march those Roman warriors? and why do the trumpets blow?
Go forth the wide world's conquerors to assault some foreign foe?

Oh! no. They've brought a Lion from his jungle-lair afar;
Caractacus, the Briton, rides upon their Victor car.
The Sun his dark locks kindles, and illumes his noble face;
The proudest, grandest reflex of the ancient British race.

Those brave, unconquered Romans led him as a fettered slave;
But the stern barbarian Hero won the homage of the brave.
The Emperor gazed with wonder at the Captive in his prime,
Magnificent in bondage, and erect with strength sublime.

Then spake the British Chieftain, "I'm a soldier, brave, but rude.
Think ye, oh! conquering Romans, that, though conquered, we're subdued?
Me ye may doom to slaughter; but by yonder Druids' shrine,
'Mid British oaks, are thousands who have hearts as bold as mine."

With a look of proud defiance on the splendid scene he gazed,
While flashed the Roman standards, and the warriors' helmets blazed.
"I envy not your grandeur, wealth, and pageantry," said he,
"Ye rich and glorious Romans, oh! how could ye envy me?

"I fought but for my country, and my half-nude brother-band,
Whose luxuries are only Heaven's sweet bounties of the land;
But ye came forth to conquer a poor peasantry content,
And all these brilliant warriors with their spears and shields ye sent.

"Oh! men and women! Romans of world-wide, God-like fame!
To bind one man with fetters do ye feel no blush of shame?
To rob me of my Cabin and my loving Wife and Child,
Whose birthright, like yon Eagles', is liberty sweet and wild?"

Then all the Romans cheered him; for the brave admire the brave:
And by the Emperor's mandate, then his freedom him they gave;
For the nobler is the Hero, oh! the deeper love he feels;
The mind that most is kingly to greatness lowliest kneels.

PLEA OF KING JAMES THE FIRST FOR HIS MOTHER, MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

The body of the beautiful and ill-fated Mary Queen of Scots was buried in the Cathedral at Peterborough. Twenty years afterwards her bones were, by order of her son and only child, King James the First, removed to Westminster Abbey, and deposited among the Kings and Queens of England.

Forgive the Dead! forgive the Dead!
  Who silent sleep below:
Last deeds are done, last words are said,
The spirit to its God hath fled,
  And now is white as snow.

My Mother's bones, go bring them here,
  In royal pomp and state;
And let the coffin fair appear,
And set the pall-encircled bier
  Within my Palace-gate.

And yoke the steeds of sable hue,
  And don the sable plume,
And bid my subjects come and view,
How one so beautiful and true,
  Is laid within the tomb.

Strew o'er her head the fairest flowers,
  Nor harbour thoughts unkind;
Beneath Westminster's Abbey-towers,
With all those Kings and Queens of ours,
  Oh, let her be enshrined!

Oh! Castle grey of Fotheringay!
  What sorrow hast thou seen!
Her ghost along thy halls shall stray;
The blood thou ne'er canst wipe away
  Of Mary, Scotland's Queen!

Her fate, alas! must all deplore;
  Poor Mary Queen of Scots!
But scan the Royal beadroll o'er,
And, ah, how many victims more
  Of dark revengeful plots!

I do remember, when a child,
  Her sweetness, beauty, grace,
Her deep affection, aspect mild;
And Heaven seemed opened when she smiled,
  So happy was her face.

My Mother's ashes hither bring
  From yonder distant town.
Sad is the fate of Queen or King!
Fain would I to perdition fling
  This burden, called a crown!

EDWY AND ELGIVA.

A BALLAD.

King Edwy loved Elgiva, a Princess tall and fair,
Of every charm in Nature she seemed the darling heir.
She came of lineage royal, a race of Britons bold,
An ancestry of nobles in many a Castle old;
But all, except her Mother, within the Abbey lay,
And earnest Pater Nosters she often went to say.

King Edwy, too, was noble, and yet, alas! too meek:
The gentlest flowers of Nature are not for tempests bleak.
And those were days of trouble, when people bent their knees
To monks, and priests, and abbots, who kept of Heaven the keys.

Both youthful when they married, and he so young a King,
But eighteen English Summers had o'er him waved their wing;
And she a year still younger—well might a jealous eye
Behold them in the shadow some weakness to espy.

St. Dunstan was the serpent, a favoured saint was he;
On such a cruel Gaoler had Heaven bestowed the key?
The oily Monk was jealous to see those loving elves,
For Priests forgive all errors but those against themselves.

'Twas Feast-night of the Wedding, fast flowed the ruby Wine,
And merry Monks and Friars are never slow to dine.
Some pledged the Bride and Bridegroom; but in a sullen mood,
St. Dunstan sate in silence o'er secret deeds to brood.
When Edwy left the banquet to converse with his Bride,
In rushed the maddened Dunstan, and dragged him from her side.
The soldiers stormed the Palace, away Elgiva bore,
And banished her for ever from England's stormy shore.

First, by his cruel minions, before she left the land,
Her face, so fair and blooming, was mangled with a brand.

They chained her in a Castle, by Killarney's lovely isle:
But only from her dungeon she saw the Summer smile.
'Twas said there came a Fairy from underneath the hill,
And healed Elgiva's features with more than human skill.
And with a blade of sword-grass she severed then her chain,
And ope'd her prison-portals, and set her free again.

To England's isle she voyaged, for Edwy was her own,
She sought his Palace chamber, and found him all alone.
But, ah! how brief their rapture! St. Dunstan and his spies
Had all her sinews severed, and burned out both her eyes.
Poor Edwy, broken-hearted, reigned but one year, and died:
Nor left he any kindred to revenge him and his Bride;
But let us all be thankful on England's blessed shore,
Those barbarous days are ended, to be restored no more.

NAPOLEON AND THE SOLDIER'S DOG.

AN INCIDENT OF THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN.

NAPOLEON crossed the field of battle,
When all the plain
Was heaped with slain,
And cannon-shots had ceased to rattle.

Then to his tent at eve returning,
He sternly gazed,
While camp-fires blazed,
With many a Future vision burning.

"Soldiers," said he, "the battle's ended,
The victory's ours!
By Padua's towers
Again hath Fortune's Star befriended.

"But there I saw a touching token,
That thrilled my heart
Till tears did start,
And even now 'tis almost broken.

"One of your Comrades there lay bleeding
Upon the ground,
His faithful hound
Beside him, while all passed unheeding.

"He guarded him with fearful scowling,
Then licked his beard,
With gore besmeared,
And fondled him with piteous howling.

"He warned me from his Master lying
Forsaken there,
Then crept with care
Beneath his cloak, 'mid dead and dying.

"My bosom swelled with strange emotion.
I broke out then,
'By gods and men!
Yon Sentinel deserves promotion.'

"Go fetch the poor dumb beast, and tend him,
Let him be fed
On meat and bread,
And then to Josephine I'll send him."

Then to Napoleon's eyes came stealing
Tears like the rest;
For in his breast
There glowed some tender natural feeling.

THE COUNTESS, AND THE RING OF THE EARL OF ESSEX.

'TWAS in those days of gallant fights, out on the rolling main,
When the Armada forth was sent, by Philip, King of Spain.
To make a bonfire of our Fleet, full sail they proudly came;
But bravely fought our British tars, and turned their boast to shame;
The Spanish galleons put to flight, like ducks upon a lake:
The laurels of our country's praise crowned Effingham and Blake.

Then rose the Earl of Essex bold, the favourite of the Queen,
A man of tall and handsome form, and proud and haughty mien.
He chased the Spaniards round the coast, in Glory's blazing sun,
And all the people and the Queen exclaimed, "'Twas nobly done!"
Elizabeth, the Queen, on him bestowed a splendid ring,
Richly inlaid with jewels rare, and worthy of a King;
And in the midst a secret sign, which none might understand,
But she and her elected Knight, the noblest in the land.

Said she," If ever trouble fall on thy devoted head,
Send me this ring, I'll be thy friend, till life itself be fled.
To thee I give it as a pledge of more than deep regard;
And help from me shall never fail when thou art evil-starred."

But fickle are a Monarch's smiles, as Fortune's rays unkind:
Condemned for treason by the Peers, and to the Tower consigned.
Then to the Tower, within whose walls he breathed his hopeless sighs,
The Countess fair of Nottingham came to him in disguise.
"My Lord," said she, "what can I do to save so dear a friend?
The noblest Earl in all our realm, this must not be thy end!"
Said he, "My Lady, good and kind, go tell the English Queen
Of my distress, chained in the Tower, and she will intervene.
Give her this diamond-sparkling ring, it bears a magic spell:
'Twill be enough without a word; she knows the token well."

The Countess took the precious ring, which flashed with many a spark,
And shed a thousand dazzling beams within the dungeon dark.
When she had left him cheered with hope, and with her kisses warm,
One would have thought that Countess fair wore some bright Angel's form.

Then to her heart she whispered low, "His life why should I spare?
The yellow-haired and jealous Queen will claim his love and care;
And closer will the bond be clasped betwixt herself and him,
If she should liberate the Earl from yonder dungeon grim.
Oh! better, better he should die than I behold his charms,
For whose dear love I've dared so much, clasped in another's arms.
'The ring hath magic gems!' quoth he. Ah me, although he bleed,
I'll keep these jewels, for perchance their magic I may need.
Elizabeth, revenge is sweet, weep, weep Grief's tears of brine:
Yon axe shall circle round his neck before those arms of thine."

Next morn the Headsman did his work, the Earl's head rolled in gore;
And then the Countess said, "Oh, Queen! thy Essex is no more."
So great a shock enraged the Queen, who shook the Countess sore,
Her rich and royal bed she spurned, and grovelled on the floor;
Where like some outcast vile she died, without one gentle friend,
And England's mighty Queen at last came to this bitter end.

EDGAR THE KING.

A BALLAD.

'TWAS Edgar the King. Well, you know the tale
Is historic, enough to turn one pale;
But now we may write of Kings, nor fear
The amputation, Child, of an ear.

'Twas Edgar the King, and Friar John,
With cool, calm brain, for his hair was gone.
Said Edgar, "Methinks 'tis time to wed."
Said John, "My Liege, have you lost your head?"

Said Edgar the King, "I have waited long
The Church's consent. I'm young and strong.
So, if you please, you may make it known,
I want a Consort to share my throne."

Said Friar John, "A Damsel I know,
As warm as fire, and as pure as snow;
A form so fine, and a face so fair,
Was never kissed by our English air."

"Oh! what is her name?" exclaimed the King;
"And where is the bower of that fairy thing?
What is her rank, and country, and birth?
Go take her a jewel of priceless worth."

"Nay, Love is not bought," said Friar John,
"Or little 'tis worth, and soon 'tis gone.
Don thee, my Liege, all thy robes of state,
And proudly ride to her Castle gate.

"Tell her she's queenly, lovely, and sweet;
Offer thy Crown at the Damsel's feet;
Then clasp her hand, with a lover's thrill,
Fawn, vow, and lie—thou wilt have thy will.

"Alfrida, that is the Maiden's name.
Her Father, my Liege, is known to fame.
You know the Earl of Devon, perchance:
With Ubba, the Dane, he broke a lance."

Then Edgar the King did straightway send
For Ethelwald, his favourite friend.
"Go thou!" said he, "o'er the Tamar's tide,
And ask Elfrida to be my Bride."

Then Ethelwald went, well skilled in art,
To win for the King Elfrida's heart;
But in making love the heart alone
Regardeth no interest save its own.

So when he beheld the Damsel's grace,
He fell in love with her beauteous face;
And Knights and Priests and Barons bold
At a secret shrine their nuptials told.

Then back went Ethelwald to the King:
Returned the jewels and golden ring.
Said he, "My Sire, yon Maiden, I wot,
On the blaze she's made is but a blot.

She is like a Gorgon, sculptured o'er
An Abbey-porch or Cathedral-door."
"Nay, say'st thou so," quoth the haughty King,
"No wedding-bells then for me shall ring."

Came Friar John. "How speedeth the day?
Your Majesty looks not half so gay."
"Oh! Friar John, not a word from you,
Though Heaven's own Priest, can I think it true.

"The Lady Elfrida's an ugly crone,
Unworthy to share a Monarch's throne.
I would not wed her for all the gold
The crypts and prisons of Rome would hold."

Said Friar John, "This intricate coil,
In the name of the Holy Church, I'll foil;
For Ethelwald, your Majesty's friend,
Hath married the Maid, and there's an end."

"The Caitiff!" the King in anger said.
"For losing his heart he'll lose his head.
He hath gained by his glozing tongue a wife;
But now I swear he shall lose his life."

"Haste! don thy robes, and mount thy steed,
And down into Devon we'll ride with speed:
The Knight of the dragon-blazoned shield
King Edgar shall make the Damsel yield."

But Ethelwald all the news had heard
Trembled his heart like a wounded bird;
And he told Elfrida all his wrong:
But 'twas all through love, that passion strong.

Said he, "When cometh the King, do thou
With a Widow's weeds becloud thy brow;
Conceal thy charms with a veil's disguise,
And banish the brightness from thine eyes.'

But Friar John was Elfrida's priest,
And she heeded not her lord the least;
And Nature seconded every plea
Of Friar John as she bent her knee.

The King arrived at the ancient hall,
A pennon hung from the flag-staff tall:
His gallant steed galloped over the ground,
Followed by bugle, and hawk, and hound.

The Seneschal old the gate unbarred,
And the King rode up the Castle yard.
The Damsel beheld the Kingly port,
Attended by all his noble Court.

She robed herself in her best attire,
And her dazzling jewels flashed like fire;
Her eyes with a lucid lustre beamed,
Her hair in a flood of glory streamed,

On her beautiful brow a coronet
Sparkled, with rubies and diamonds set:
And she glided forth with a grace serene,
Like that of Creation's earliest Queen.

An audience with her desired the King,
Who told her how he had sent the ring;
And offered to her his heart and hand,
As the loveliest Maid in all the land.

And, nothing loth, she inclined her ear,
The flatteries of the King to hear;
And Ethelwald's fate, alas! was sealed,
The King him sent to the Battle-field.

But on the way, in a lonely wood,
His corse was found in a shroud of blood:
Edgar the King and Elfrida the fair
Were married, and had a son and heir.

BALLAD OF KING ALFRED.

When Alfred was our Saxon King,
The Danes besieged our shore,
Like locusts, and each vernal thing
Their hateful presence bore.

The wheat and barley, beans and rye,
And men and women fell:
Their deeds beneath our English sky
'Twere sorrowful to tell.

Like tigers from their midnight lair,
On plunder bent they came:
The young, the innocent, the fair,
They brought to death or shame.

King Alfred fought them oft by land,
And eke upon the sea;
He was the Chieftain of a band
As true and brave as he.

He gave his wealth, he gave his crown,
He gave his jewels rare,
When Famine, like a cloud, came down,
To blight our country fair.

But still the fury of the Danes
Left desolation's signs;
They ravaged all our fields and plains,
Destroyed our homes and shrines.

King Alfred and his valiant Knights,
With lances set in rest,
Rode forth amid a hundred fights,
To lower the Danish crest.

At length the barbarous army stormed
King Alfred's Palace towers;
The Darlings at his bosom warmed,
His gentle household flowers,

His Wife and Child, so dear and sweet,
Loved with a love untold,
They carried off in their retreat,
As hostages for gold.

And whither, whither they had fled,
No tidings could he learn;
And full of apprehensions dread,
All comfort did he spurn.

"My doves are lost!" exclaimed the King;
"Their nests in ruin laid.
I'll take my own wild Harp, and sing
Through hamlet, town, and glade.

"A prisoner is my bonny Queen,
My Child upon her knee;
I'll don a garb of Tartan green,
That none my rank may see.

"Nay, do not cry, my little Page;
For since the world began,
Comes sorrow both to youth and age,—
A King is but a man.

"Thy Mother, Boy, now lowly laid,
Right well my Queen did prize,
And thou hast every wish obeyed;
Go, wipe those hazel eyes."

"Oh! take me with you," said the Boy;
"For I can nimbly dance;
And that will give the younkers joy:
I learned the art in France.

"My Lord and King, so kind art thou,
So gracious was my Queen;
My life shall be my Monarch's now,
Whate'er may come between.

"And, oh! your darling son, my Sire,
I loved his balmy breath;
I'd snatch him from a house on fire,
Or with him burn to death."

Oh! then the royal Troubadour
Across his shoulder flung
His Harp, and all along the shore
He walked, and played, and sung.

And of his country's wrongs he sang,
And in so sweet a strain,
The people wept, the welkin rang
With curses of the Dane.

King Alfred's Shepherd and his Wife
Him saw beside their Cot;
But even she who gave him life
Would now have known him not.

The Shepherd's Dame with pity sighed,
And begged them to come in.
"Come, turn the oaten cake," she cried;
"And good luck you shall win."

He turned the cake into the fire,
Which brought him bitter blame.
The Woman's face grew red with ire,
The King smiled at the Dame.

They came at length to Gregor's Court,
Of Scotland brave the King.
The Ladies asked them to the sport,
To hear them play and sing.

Of Helen and the siege of Troy,
And Paris' love, sang he;
Of Priam, Hector, themes of joy,—
A wandering Homer free!

Then Gregor's eyes were filled with tears,
Moved by those thrilling wires,
Which told of mingled hopes and fears,
And of his warrior-sires.

"If thou," quoth he, "wert not so poor,
Sweet Singer, I'd have sworn
Thou wert the King of Albion's shore,
Of royal lineage born!

"Nay, by the marble chair of Scoon,
Where Scotia's Kings were crowned,
I never heard so sweet a tune
My festive-board around!"

When Alfred doffed his hat and plume,
Such perfect grace he showed,
The Maidens' cheeks were flushed with bloom
And like June-roses glowed.

For oh, he was a handsome wight,
With open face and frank,
With eyes as any falcon's bright,
That well became his rank.

Sometimes they sheltered in the wood,
The Cot or Shepherd's fold;
Then on they marched by stream and flood
Red Grange and Castle old.

The last sun-ray in splendour flamed
Athwart the mountains dun;
They saw a gallant Chieftain maimed,
His Steed away had run.

The daring Page sprang at the Steed,
And caught the dangling reins;
The King flew to the Knight with speed,
And staunched his flowing veins.

The King beheld young Donald there,
The son of Gregor brave;
The wounded Prince breathed many a prayer
When Alfred stooped to save.

One simple word revealed the King
To Donald's vision keen;
Him back to life it seemed to bring:
He told him of the Queen:

And how old Kenwith's noble lord,
The Earl of Devon, fought
The Danish General, sword to sword,
And low his helmet brought:

That Guthrum's Standard of renown
Was seized by Oddune's men:
The Danish army fled the town,
And camped in Ashdown glen.

"Adieu, adieu! God speed!" said he,
"Should'st thou an army need,
To set thy bleeding country free,
We'll march across the Tweed!"

"Who goes there?" roared the Sentinel,
By Guthrum's camp. "Who goes?
Speak, or my spear shall mark ye well
As carrion for the crows!"

King Alfred then began to play,
His Page not long was mute;
No stranger sight seen since the day
When Orpheus played his lute.

Out came the Danes, in went the pair
Of wanderers truly fain.
The haughty Danish King was there,
And heard the bardic strain.

But Alfred's eyes took note of all
The Camp's blockaded plan;
Intrenchments strong, and rocky wall,
And all the dastard clan.

The Danish troops fell fast asleep,
And all around was still:
The Guards were lulled in slumber deep,
Of Wine they'd had their fill.

There rose a meteor on his sight,
The beauteous vision passed:
Was it the morning-star so bright
Beyond the storm and blast?

Ah! no: it was a form of grace
Within a guarded tent:
His wife Elsitha's angel face,
And there King Alfred went.

He clasped her to his eager breast,
The Page embraced the Child;
And o'er the mountain's starry crest
They sped like hunters wild.

And all that night they travelled fast
To the Isle of Athelney,
Nor till the peril all was passed
One moment did they stay.

The King united all his band,
Whose ardour nought could damp:
They marched across the ruined land,
And smote the Danish camp.

And Guthrum bold, the Danish Chief,
They led in captive-chains;
But he was so o'erwhelmed with grief,
They spared him all his pains.

King Alfred reigned, and ruled the land,
For noblest aims and ends;
A gallant Fleet of Ships he manned,
And Kings became his friends.

CHARLOTTE CORDAY, THE ROSE OF NORMANDY.

RED rolled the Sun adown the West,
'Mid clouds in gorgeous colours dressed,
Heaven's ruby heart of dazzling flame,
Whose fierce pulsations went and came,
The harbinger of angrier skies,
Wild storms and whirlwinds, soon to rise.

The young Franquelin, soldier bold,
Kept tryst beside the Convent old,
Until his longing eyes should see
The fairest Maid of Normandy.
That night she cast her veil aside,
Franquelin's chosen promised Bride.
Monastic vows were vain to quell
Those feelings lovers' hearts that swell.

Tied to an elm his steed remained;
He champed the bit, the bridle strained;
While, like some demon's awful form,
Swept o'er the woods the sullen Storm.
But, hark! a horse's hoofs he hears,
The Angel of his Hope appears,
Flies like the wind her palfrey white,
A shadowy spectre through the night;
And halts beside the spreading tree,
Where keeping lonely tryst stood he.

Oh! kisses warm, embraces strong,
Were recompense for waiting long.
Then on to Caën their chargers fleet
Dashed through the lanes, and down the street;
Borne on the gale, with pensive spell,
They heard the distant Vesper Bell.

The Wedding-day was named. Alas!
That day might never come to pass!
For never yet was love so true
That half the bliss it dreamed of knew!

'Mong Girondists a volunteer
Was young Franquelin, swain so dear.
Ill-fated France Marat now ruled,
In every deadly intrigue schooled;
A demagogue of reddest type,
For every deed of bloodshed ripe.
Franquelin joined the noble band
Of loyal hearts with purpose grand,
Whose pledges rose where'er they trod,
"Here's to our Country and our God!"
The watchwords terror struck in those
Who were their God's, their Country's foes.

The Tyrant heard Doom's trumpet-blast,
And deep into his dungeon cast
Those noble Champions of the Right,
To die when rose to-morrow's light.
With blood, the brightest ever seen,
He vowed to gild the Guillotine.

But Charlotte Corday, fair and free,
The sweetest Rose of Normandy,
With Woman's swift instinctive mind
Resolved the Tyrant's throne to find;
And beg, on bended knees, some grace
For men of such heroic race.
Thenceforth at home, 'mid books of worth,
The Woman in her leapt to birth.
"Dear, Father mine, good bye, good bye,
Dark clouds obscure our native sky.
Through Revolution's hydra head
Our land with bravest blood is red.
Corneille, my Grandsire, seems to start
Out of his grave to play his part;
And oft his spirit speaks to me,
'From tyrants set thy Country free.'
My favourite authors, dear as gold,
Are Plutarch and the Bible old:
Accept them from thy Daughter, Sire,
Within my breast I feel their fire."

'Twas Night. The prison-door swung wide;
Franquelin and his friends inside;
The Banquet-hour for thoughts sublime,
And talk of themes outlasting Time.
The Gaoler knew the Maiden well,
And passed her to her Lover's cell.
'Twould cost his head if it were known;
But he had Children of his own.
All Despots were, methinks, of yore,
Well-served perchance, but hated more.

Franquelin woke as from a dream.
"Oh! is it thou, or some bright beam
From Heaven, within this charnel-place?
Oh! stay, and let me see thy face!"

"Yes, I am here," his Charlotte cried;
"My heart is beating by thy side.
Be constant and courageous ever,
Till Freedom crowns each brave endeavour.

"Yet ah!" quoth he, "tis joy to meet,
For life is dear, and love is sweet;
Our promised Wedding-day, to-morrow
Will rise, alas! in pain and sorrow,

Through him, our Country's greatest curse,
That blot upon God's universe!
Hath he not borne the Felon's brand,
When exiled from his native land?"

Said she, "Fear not the Tyrant's power,
For him there dawns a future hour.
Never goes Fate's dial back,
The Nemesis is on his track;
And men may die, but Nations rise
To thoughts and deeds of high emprise.
Friend Barbaroux avenged shall be,
Our souls, my love, at least are free.
And now, farewell! No idle vaunt.
I'll hence, and seek the Tyrant's haunt.
If Woman's prayers and tears prevail,
To light and liberty all hail!
Ave Maria! fare thee well,
The tocsin sounds the Tyrant's knell!"

"Oh, Sweetheart mine! hear, hear my prayer,
And seek not thou the lion's lair.
The Libertine thy fame would wrong,
And thou art weak and he is strong;
Help thee, Mary—guard and save!
I'd rather see thee in thy grave."

"An argument of strength is mine;
Look! canst thou see my dagger shine?
Our plighted troth we'll keep in Heaven,
Through Him by whom all souls are shriven."

She sought the Tyrant's Mansion grim,
While fears of murder haunted him.
She passed the Lodge with vacant stare,
Ascended fearlessly the stair.
She heeded not his courtezans
In bold fulfilment of her plans;
But rushed into the Tyrant's room,
Her handsome face aflush with bloom.
Just from his bath, and half attired,
He saw her enter, and admired
Her stature tall, her noble mien,
And aspect of some tragic Queen.
Then, with a smile more to be feared
Than darkest frown that e'er appeared,
Said, "Woman, what wouldst thou with me?"
"Those brave Girondists, set them free!"

"What ransom, Maiden, dost thou bring?"
"No red, red gold, nor anything
But tears, and prayers,—a Woman's all;
And these, I grant you, are but small.
If thou wilt spare those precious lives,
Maidens, mothers, babes, and wives
Will bless the memory of thy name:
Absolve thee from this deed of shame!"

"Yes, thou hast jewels, Maiden bold,
Outweighing heaps of flaming gold:
Thy beauty, wit, and flowing tresses,
Richly formed for fond caresses."

Then he approached her, and she saw
The brazen gaze that fears no law,
Ungoverned passion's subtle sign,
The ugly features red with Wine.

"Wouldst thou," said she, "my honour blast?
This moment, fiend, shall be thy last.
Prepare, prepare to meet thy fate;
For love like thine is worse than hate."

Then from her breast the blade she drew,
And cried, "Take this, the ransom due;"
And with a bound that made him start
She plunged the dagger in his heart.
Then, with a dreadful savage yell,
Back headlong in his bath he fell.

She flung the weapon at his feet,
And said, "My love and I shall meet
In yon Elysium, bright and fair,—
One heart, one soul, for ever there."

She twined around her brow a wreath,
When borne upon the car to death;
And many thought they saw afar
Another glorious heavenly car,
The Tyrant's final doom that seals,
With Freedom's spirit in its wheels.
She laid her head upon the block,
And hardly seemed to feel the shock.
A hireling knave with open hand
The dead cheek struck so meekly bland.
The blow appeared to rouse her ire;
The cheek blushed with indignant fire,
As it would say, "Thou Caitiff base,
To smite a poor dead Woman's face!"

There is a legend of the Rose,
In richest crimson vest that glows:—
A Maiden fair in Palestine
Was burned upon the Martyrs' shrine;
'Twas Persecution lit the flame,
In pure Religion's sacred name;
And when the torch had fired the pile,
The Maiden wore an Angel's smile:
And all around it, unconsumed,
Innumerable roses bloomed,
The first of those exuberant flowers
That grew outside fair Eden's bowers.
So, for our Heroine we yearn,
And shrine her dust in Freedom's urn:
While wreaths of roses burst to bloom,
To hang a garland round her tomb.

THE END.

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OPINIONS OF THE PRESS

ON

MR. SHELDON CHADWICK'S "POEMS OF LIFE," &c.,

REVISED AND REPRINTED IN THE PRESENT WORK.

Mr. Chadwick wants nothing but a sufficient number of intelligent readers to guide the public mind to the true conclusion, that he ought to have that amount of appreciation and encouragement which would insure for him that degree of hope which genius itself requires to sustain its labours. Mr. Chadwick handles the English language as a weapon which he can use at pleasure. It is no strain of thought which supplies his very chaste and elegant diction: his thoughts and feelings, too, are manly and pure, his imagination rich and bold. "Never lag behind" is a true poem, in the form of song, which has the strength and the freedom of thought which are found in superior intellect. Dr. Mackay, at least, would not beat it. "An Episode from Life" has a sentiment about it which makes one feel it is "an o'er true tale." Let the reader peruse it, and, if untouched, his heart must be a gizzard. Thomas Hood might have written it. Could Chadwick quite attain to the pith and point of poor Hood, his mantle would not still hang on the peg for want of a wearer.—*The Era*, 1858.

Mr. Chadwick's poems are poems in the truest sense, beautiful in sentiment, rich in imagery, and with a clear musical ring in their melody. Had they been sent to us anonymously, as until lately we were ignorant of Mr. Chadwick's existence, we should have given his lyrical brother, Mr. Gerald Massey, the credit of them, and certainly that sweet singer would have had no occasion to be ashamed of the honour. Mr. Chadwick is by no means unworthy to rank with the best of our younger poets.—*Scottish Press*, 1855.

Mr. Chadwick possesses all the qualities of a true poet, powers of description, disquisition, and reflection, a love and knowledge of nature, a fertile fancy, freshness of youthful sentiment, and a lively sympathy with what is excellent. His volume has left upon our mind a strong impression of his originality and poetical ability, and fairly entitles him to take his place among the foremost ranks of the poets of the day.—*Weekly Times*, 1855.

Those who admire *Paracelsus*, *Festus*, *Balder*, and the *Life-Drama*, will find in Mr. Chadwick's dramatic pieces abundance of the same kind of beauties, possibly with more fine phrases on a single page than they have throughout their whole extent.—*Bolton Chronicle*, 1859.

"Poems of Life." By Sheldon Chadwick. New and cheap edition. Routledge and Warnes, London.—Sheldon Chadwick is now a name in literary circles. Since 1854, he has been favourably known as the author of a dramatic poem, the "Paradise of Passion," &c., published by the late David Bogue, of Fleet Street, which placed him at once in the foremost ranks of the poets of the day. Mr. Chadwick is never insipid, vapid, or diffuse. His poems are literally packed with thought, and every line is full of meaning. How chaste and elegant, and withal how deeply touching, are the following stanzas, composed on the burial of a baby in a grave three feet deep in snow! Who can read it, and remain unmoved?....There is also a vigour and earnestness about these poems that show the writer to be one who has fought his way along. He has struggled in the cloud, and charged through battalions of difficulties, ere he attained this exalted summit, from which he can look down on so many aspirants for literary honours. It has been stated, we believe in the "Liverpool Mercury," that a weird poem, entitled "An Episode from Life," is from the poet's actual experience. This is the narrative of facts which our readers will agree with us would have crushed the spirit of most men, but the author makes of his sorrow his greatest crown, and rises from it to an altitude of sublimity. He and his wife and child were at Guisbro', in Yorkshire, in the intensely severe winter of 1850. He was engaged to lecture at the Mechanics' Institution, Scarborough. To get there would have been a long way round, and he resolved to go on foot over the moors. His wife earnestly pleaded to accompany him, and he could not refuse. The morning was bleak and frosty, but no snow fell. These poor pilgrims soon found, however, how gigantic was the task before them. The roads were rough and flinty, with deep hollows and steep acclivities. Baby was ailing, and, though warmly folded, grew restless. Hail and snow began to descend. Night was closing the gates of day. Shelter there was none. Like a black hearse rolled past them the huge prison-van, whose driver could not take them up. Then, to their alarm, they discovered that their child was dead in the wife's shawl, who clasped to her bosom the cold effigy of their infantine angel. All this is described in the poem, which infinitely transcends the fictitious sorrows of inventive genius. In our estimation this poem alone ought to save the book. We have only space to quote a few verses of this pathetic production. The tender-glowing tearful beauty of this grave-side song has never been surpassed. The more ambitious poems of Mr. Chadwick contain many noble and exalted passages, which it is impossible for us here to quote. "Eve to her First-born" is a gem. It represents poor Eve after the fall, sitting outside the gates of Paradise, nursing baby Cain beneath the branches of a palm. Her remorse, her love, her mother-anguish and prophecy, are all in the poet's richest colouring, and the conception is a fine one. Poetry to be attractive should be picturesque, and Mr. Chadwick aggrandises with imagery every thought and fancy that emanates from his teeming imagination. A striking illustration of this fact is to be found in "The Heart's Tragedy." Observe the touches of *naive* beauty. The dream-eyed boy has been snatched from the bosom of his drowned mother on the sea-shore.—*Canterbury Journal*, 1858.

Poetry is perennial; its springs are never dry, its fountains are ever playing. Deep in the heart lie its sources, and ever and anon its streams sparkle forth in utterances that vibrate through the world. No wonder that poets abound, or rather that young and ardent minds a glow with passion and pregnant with sentiment, find fittest expression in strains of song. True, these strains are not all of the same power. One poet sings with a voice like a trumpet, awakening and inspiring all who hear him; another sends forth a lute-like melody, that charms the heart of the maiden and the recluse.

Mr. Chadwick's poetry has a power and sweetness of its own; its most remarkable features being an exuberance of imagery and a profusion of epithets. The first poem in this volume is very characteristic both of the poet and the man....He sings of the wrongs and sufferings of the sons and daughters of labour, and contrasts them with the material happiness and splendour of the rich. This is an unpleasant view of life, and reminds one of Ebenezer Elliott's fierce denunciations against the upholders of the breadtax. The poet contrasts the murky town-dwellings of the poor with the

glorious scenery of the country. He takes the people by the train into the country for a holiday; and the very fact of their being thus able to enjoy themselves in these hard times somewhat militates against the writer's theory of their wretched condition. The working-classes are not the wretched caged-up prisoners they are said to be. They have their holidays as well as other people, and they take as many as they please. Many working men spend far more proportionately in pleasure and dissipation than their employers do. But leaving Mr. Chadwick's gloomy theory, we gladly turn to his poetry. He paints every natural object he meets in glowing colours....Mr. Chadwick's best poem, "The Heart's Tragedy," abounds with good writing, and is full of pathos. It tells the old, old story of love and ruin most pathetically. Among the minor pieces we may especially commend the "Birth of Poetry," a noble and most musical lyric; an "Episode from Life" (a touching episode, too, apparently taken from real life); and a "Dream of the Syrens." There is a vigour and earnestness about the poems that show the writer to be one who has wrestled with fate. The very obstacles he has encountered have served but to sharpen his poetical falchion, and make it send forth flashes of light as he swings it round him, and cleaves the idols and shams he encounters. Good poetry is the result of good feeling, good sense, and good taste; and good taste can only be acquired by the study of good poetry. The poet who would now write for immortality must study well what the immortal poets have written. Rhyme is easy of attainment. Rhythm is within the reach of all who have a musical ear; imagery is not far off from minds in search of analogies. But, to link all these in one, and to compose a poem that shall unite beauty of thought with beauty of rhythm and beauty of illustration, is no easy task. The hill of Parnassus is lofty; broad is its base, and many are the paths that lead upward to its summit. But the air there is "difficult," and few there be that can breathe it. And, alas! there is only standing room at the top for some half-dozen (a Homer, a Shakespeare, a Milton, and a Goethe or so), while thousands are toiling to get there. Mr. Sheldon Chadwick has climbed well already. He has got the inspiration; he is a long way from the bottom, and has left many aspirants below. Let his motto be "Excelsior!"—*Rochester Gazette*, 1859.

A volume of genuine poetry. It is a mine of wealth that will amply repay the explorer. Walk where we will here, we seem to be walking in the very paradise of Song. Original in thought, truthful in sentiment, and with something of the ring of Charles Mackay's buoyant and spirit-stirring poetry.—*The Critic*, 1855.

Contains some very beautiful and graceful writing, evidently the production of a mind filled with the cultivation of the beautiful, and imbued with that innate perception of the harmonious in words, measure, and meaning, which is given to those only who possess the true poetic faculty.—*Weekly Dispatch*, 1855.

Dedicated to his wife in a sonnet of exquisite beauty. The poem with which the book opens contains passages which remind us of the best parts of Bailey's "Festus." Some of the minor poems are admirably written.—*Wesleyan Times*, 1856.

This volume of poems, by Mr. Sheldon Chadwick, does honour to this year of grace 1855. We question whether there will be published during the present year a volume containing such an abundance of poetic situations, such a lavish expenditure of fancy and imagery. There is not only the sense of rapture in these poems, but its most exhilarant expression. Mr. Chadwick's muse has the true essential of vitality—it throbs with the living fire of thought.—*Literary Gazette*, 1856.

We are happy to hail the advent of another new poet in the ranks of labour. Mr. Sheldon Chadwick wields the pen with a bold and vigorous hand. That he has lived the poetry he writes every page most clearly proves. Though a self-taught man he writes with the grace and ease of a scholar. There is music in these verses....Many of the poems are evidently transcripts from real life....Here is another noble son of song, who has had to struggle against sorrows and privations that would have broken down most men. Oh God! how long shall the gifted suffer thus? We trust better days are in store for the author, who is a man of unquestionably original genius.—*People's Paper*, 1855.

Here there is truth, grace, charity, noble and ennobling sentiment, the poetry of the heart, the eloquence of nature. At times there may be a little too much tinsel; but Mr. Chadwick will be less lavish of ornament with riper experience. Here is a gem that has escaped the lacquer, and is all the better for it....If Mr. Chadwick could only write fifty pages of poetry like this "Episode from Real Life," he would be immortal. As it is, this poem alone should be enough to put the bays about his brows. The "Heart's Tragedy" is a noble poem full of bright and splendid metaphors; but would have been still better if it had been carefully rewritten and pruned of that excess of ornament before alluded to. Nothing have we ourselves regretted so much as hasty "proofing." While a pure vein of morality runs through every poem, there is often "perfect music set to noble words." "Eve to her First-born" is a conception worthy of Milton.—*The Patriot*, 1859.

There is much beautiful and original thought in your poetry, which in time you will concentrate. Heed not what the world says of you: many have been great before it has *visèd* their passport to immortality.—*Gerald Massey*, 1854.

The faults of your poetry appear to me to be those of the school to which you have attached yourself,—that of Festus-Bailey, Dobell, Smith, and others. You have, however, what they have not, true lyrical power. If you could but eschew the mannerisms of the spasmodic race at present so much extolled, you might produce poetry worthy of the country that gave you birth. You are evidently well read in Tennyson, Browning, Longfellow, and Shelley, and fall at times into imitation, as is the case with most young poets; but the ideas and metaphors are your own, and in course of time you will doubtless make a style more distinctly individualized.—*Ernest Jones*, 1855.

Your poems are very sweet, and evidently spring fresh from the heart. The "Episode from Life" will appear in a splendidly illustrated edition of the Poets, published by Routledge. Wishing you success in life and literature.—*Charles Mackay*, 1858.

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